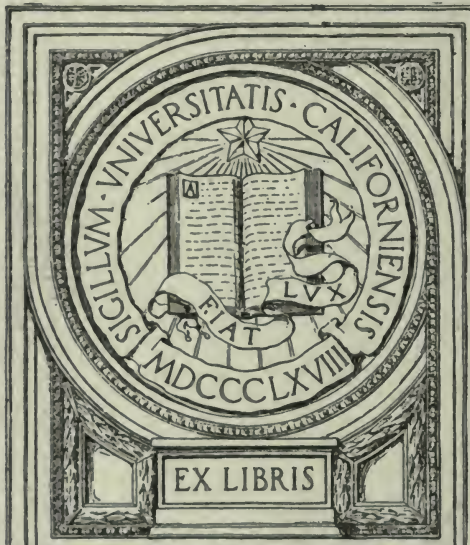
THE CHILDREN'S PSALM-BOOK

MRS NATHANIEL L. COHEN

JACOB VOORSANGER MEMORIAL



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Bible. O.T. Psalms. Hebrew and English.

THE CHILDREN'S PSALM-BOOK

A Selection of Psalms with Explanatory Comments, together with a Prayer-Book for Home Use in Jewish Families

By

MRS. NATHANIEL L. COHEN

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TO PARENTS

THIS little volume is an attempt to help Parents in the anxious task of moulding the first conscious efforts towards abstract thought in the minds of their children.

Little children always seem to have a very present consciousness of the existence of a supernatural power, as though the voice that breathed life into them still echoed within them. It is the Parents' task reverently to use this inborn instinct, in order to stimulate the development of the higher impulses of humanity. If this consciousness be stimulated recklessly or injudiciously, it may lead to superstition and to the miseries of nervous terror, and all the attendant evils of cowardliness, deceit, and untruthfulness. But if it be treated wisely, that mysterious consciousness develops into a loving trustfulness in the goodness of the Great Power, and lends courage and comfort at many a critical moment both of childhood and after-life. It is the basis of every form of moral teaching, and of that great fundamental doctrine of Judaism,—the direct personal responsibility of every human being to the One Divine Power. It is, in fact, the well-spring of conscience and courage, and grows with the growth

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of the understanding, and becomes an ever-expanding ideal of goodness, around which all the great attributes of goodness group themselves in the youthful mind,—Justice, Truthfulness, Honour, Kindness, Generosity. This conception of goodness —the consciousness of something stronger, higher, better than ourselves—helps to develop the faculty of veneration, and with it the kindred feeling of filial obedience and love in the highest form.

There is a questioning and analytical phase of mental development through which all thinking minds are bound to pass, in the transition from accepting the parental religious teaching with child-like faith to assimilating it by the aid of thought and reason. At this stage, when all forms and observances are critically considered and weighed, a consciousness of a Higher Power above and beyond mortality, a habit of mind of looking for help to that Higher Power, and a knowledge of the deeper emblematic meaning of observances temper the judgment and aid every human being in that process of self-discipline by which he makes his faith in a special sense his own.

It seems to me that if the development of the religious sense is omitted from education, the most exalted idea of goodness is left out, and the sense of duty, and of right and wrong, is little more than an appreciation of the minor virtues. Life is so much the poorer for being shorn of the halo of high spiritual aspiration. Instead of a fixed and lofty ideal of life and conduct, based on the highest conception of Divine Perfection of which the human

mind is capable, and to which one and all try to rise, there prevails a limited and fluctuating ideal, subject to the chance influences of surroundings and associates, and coloured by the social grade and worldly interests of each individual, and by the changeful current level of public opinion.

I think it is a pressing duty to endeavour to avert this disastrous moral plight, to which the charge of materialism so justly comes home. I have therefore tried in this little book to help Parents to familiarize their children in home talks and readings with the exalted poetry of the Psalms; with their lofty moral teaching and their comforting prayers. The simpler Psalms of Praise need little comment, but it may, I hope, be found helpful to analyse the train of thought in the more elaborate Psalms, and also to indicate some characteristic peculiarities of Eastern modes of expression.

The Psalms are not arranged in the Bible in the order of simplicity; therefore in this volume the numerical titles of the Psalms most suitable for reading to young children are printed in red, both in the Index and in the text.

I think the Psalms should be read to young children more than once without any comment, unless a child asks for explanation. Most children love the sound and the word-pictures of the Psalms, long before they can take in the full meaning.

I am aware that there is much repetition of the same ideas in the comments on the Psalms. The same moral lessons may be drawn from, and the same explanations are applicable to, many different

Psalms. But as F. D. Maurice once said:—"I never profess to teach new things; I never had but one or two things that I was anxious to say, and I have been saying them over and over again for thirty years in as many different ways as I can, to reach many different hearts and minds."

I have selected about half the Psalm-book for children's reading and for explanatory comment. By the time that children know the whole of this selection well, it is hoped that the ethics of the Psalms, and also the genius of Hebrew poetry, will have become more or less familiar to them, and that they will dive for themselves and grasp the pearls of beauty in the rest of the Psalter.

One word as to those Psalms in which a discordant note of enmity jars on our ears in the midst of sweet and beautiful utterances. David, the typical Psalmist, conscious of his own desire to do right, expresses a soldier's rough and ready conviction that sooner or later victory will be with the righteous and defeat with the unrighteous. Indeed, war is still, as it has ever been, the last resort of humanity seeking justice. A certain boldness in interpreting the significance of events prevailed not only in Biblical times, but as late as the days of the Puritans in England and Covenanters in Scotland.

The simple reasonings which satisfied our forefathers about cause and effect in human life no longer carry conviction to every mind. But the wider sphere of modern knowledge and thought increases, as it were, the circumference of our contact with the unknown, and enhances our apprecia-

tion of the heroic mental attitude of the Psalmist, who says: "I know, O Lord, Thy judgments are right, and that Thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me."

Scattered as we are, and often out of reach of Synagogues, it seems peculiarly desirable for us to cultivate the habit of Domestic Services. There is an old Rabbinical saying to the effect that sooner than omit the daily repetition of the Shemang (that most perfect reminder of a high mental and moral attitude and its practical expression in life), we should recite it while doing our daily work. It is equally desirable never to omit holding a service on Saturday as a tribute of thanks for the beneficent law of the Sabbath—lest the day of rest degenerate into a day merely of laziness and amusement. A very simple form of daily domestic prayers is therefore added to this volume, and also a little Sabbath service for use in Jewish families when unable to attend Synagogue.

In conclusion I should like to express my indebtedness to several kind friends, especially Mrs. Redcliffe Salaman, and the late Rev. D. Fay, whose death occurred while this book was in the press, for much valuable advice; and also to Mr. Claude G. Montefiore, Dr. Driver and Dr. Wellhausen, from whose versions I have occasionally borrowed when I have ventured to vary the translation; and lastly my sense of the help my own children have given me (consciously and unconsciously) in this labour of love.

JULIA M. COHEN.

TO CHILDREN

Our first feeling about God is His goodness to us. He made us and gave us all we have, our father and mother, to love us and take care of us, the earth to live in, and the sun to shine on us.

Our next feeling about God is His greatness. He made the whole world and everything in it, and every living creature. The more we think how great God is, the more we feel how kind He is to every one of us, and the more we want to thank Him for all His goodness to us.

This is a book of Thanks and Praise to God, and is called the Book of Psalms. It was written long, long ago by our forefathers. Many of the Psalms in it were written and sung by King David 3,000 years ago.

One of the Psalms says that a thousand years in the sight of God "are but as yesterday, when it is past." For God never changes, Right and Wrong never change, and God's mercy to us never changes. So we still say and sing these old, old Psalms when we want to thank God for "His goodness, and His wonderful works to the children of men."

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THE CHILDREN'S PSALM-BOOK

PSALM I.

BLESSED is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in His law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Note on Ps. 1.

This Psalm describes a good man, who steadily resists being tempted by bad example to do what he knows to be wrong, and who is helped to do right by ever keeping the law of God in his mind.

By imagery (that is, description by comparison) the Psalmist suggests the thought that just as the ever-flowing water of the river brings strength to the tree to bear foliage and fruit, so the constant efforts of a man who tries always to do what is right produces in him the ripe fruit of goodness and wisdom.

By the same imagery the contrast of the ungodly man is shown; he is compared to the chaff, the dry husk of the grain that is blown away and lost. "The ungodly man shall not stand in the judgment," because he has no principles of conduct; therefore he has no power to judge others.

I. א

אַשְׁרֵי הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר | לֹא הָלַךְ בַּעֲצַת
רְשָׁעִים וּבְדֶרֶךְ חַטָּאִים לֹא עָמָד וּבְמוֹשַׁב לֵצִים
לֹא יָשָׁב: 2 כִּי | אִם־בְּתוֹרַת יְהוָה חֶפְצוֹ וּבְתוֹרָתוֹ
יֶהְגֶּה יוֹמָם וָלָיְלָה: 3 וְהָיָה כְּעֵץ שָׁתוּל עַל־פַּלְגֵי־
מָיִם אֲשֶׁר פִּרְיוֹ | יִתֵּן בְּעִתּוֹ וְעָלֵהוּ לֹא יִבּוֹל וְכֹל
אֲשֶׁר־יַעֲשֶׂה יַצְלִיחַ: 4 לֹא כֵן הָרְשָׁעִים כִּי אִם־כַּמֹּץ
אֲשֶׁר־תִּדְּפֶנּוּ רוּחַ: 5 עַל־כֵּן | לֹא־יָקֻמוּ רְשָׁעִים
בַּמִּשְׁפָּט וְחַטָּאִים בַּעֲדַת צַדִּיקִים: 6 כִּי־יוֹדֵעַ יְהוָה
דֶּרֶךְ צַדִּיקִים וְדֶרֶךְ רְשָׁעִים תֹּאבֵד:

Note on Ps. I.

"Sinners shall not stand in the congregation of the righteous;" but God does not account those sinners who are sorry for their wrong-doing, and try hard to do better. "The way of the ungodly shall perish," but not necessarily the ungodly themselves; for as Isaiah the prophet said, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, for He will have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."

The Psalmist says that the deeds of the wicked shall be like chaff, which is lost. Thus, if the wicked man persists in his evil way he sees the goodness of God prevail against him. And if he repents of his wickedness, to see that it has perished is his comfort and his reward.

PSALM IV.

To the Chief Musician.[1] A Psalm of David.

HEAR me when I call, O God of my righteousness! Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer. 2 O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? how long will ye love vanity, and seek after leasing? Selah. 3 But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for Himself; the LORD will hear when I call unto Him. 4 Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah. 5 Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD. 6 There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? LORD, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us. 7 Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased. 8 I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for Thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.

Note on Ps. IV. This Psalm, like so many others, seems to bring the character of David's very self before us. We can hardly believe that the man who wrote it lived 3000 years ago; but as Carlyle says about the heroes of old, "Heroism" is "the divine relation . . . which in all times unites a Great Man to other men."

We feel how true this is as we read the psalms of King David, the hero-poet, and realize his brave,

[1] For note on "The Chief Musician," see Ps. lxxxi.

IV. ד

לַמְנַצֵּחַ בִּנְגִינוֹת מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד׃

בְּקָרְאִי עֲנֵנִי | אֱלֹהֵי צִדְקִי בַּצָּר הִרְחַבְתָּ לִּי חָנֵּנִי
וּשְׁמַע תְּפִלָּתִי׃ 2 בְּנֵי־אִישׁ עַד־מָה כְּבוֹדִי לְכְלִמָּה
תֶּאֱהָבוּן רֵיק תְּבַקְשׁוּ כָזָב סֶלָה׃ 3 וּדְעוּ כִּי־הִפְלָה
יְהוָה חָסִיד לוֹ יְהוָה יִשְׁמַע בְּקָרְאִי אֵלָיו׃ 4 רִגְזוּ
וְאַל־תֶּחֱטָאוּ אִמְרוּ בִלְבַבְכֶם עַל־מִשְׁכַּבְכֶם וְדֹמּוּ
סֶלָה׃ 5 זִבְחוּ זִבְחֵי־צֶדֶק וּבִטְחוּ אֶל־יְהוָה׃ 6 רַבִּים
אֹמְרִים מִי־יַרְאֵנוּ טוֹב נְסֵה־עָלֵינוּ אוֹר פָּנֶיךָ יְהוָה׃
7 נָתַתָּה שִׂמְחָה בִלְבָבִי מֵעֵת דְּגָנָם וְתִירוֹשָׁם רָבּוּ׃
8 בְּשָׁלוֹם יַחְדָּו אֶשְׁכְּבָה וְאִישָׁן כִּי־אַתָּה יְהוָה לְבָדָד
לָבֶטַח תּוֹשִׁיבֵנִי׃

simple nature and high-minded though impulsive disposition.

Note on Ps. IV.

In Psalm iv. David gratefully recalls God's mercies to him in the past and humbly prays for divine help. Then he breaks off to lament the folly of those who, "turning my glory into shame, love vain things and seek after falsehood." We feel the overwhelming earnestness of the reproof in those stirring words. Turning that in which *I* glory (my faith in God and all it means in guiding my conduct to try to please

Note on Ps. IV.

Him) into a shameful thing (which means *their* shame, the loving of folly and seeking after base and contemptible objects of desire).

Verse 5 is one of the many forms in which David uttered the thought that was his guiding star through life, as it may well be ours. "Offer the offering of righteousness and put your trust in the Lord." The same thought in its very highest form is echoed in the next verse. If we can feel that we have made

PSALM VIII.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

O LORD our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth! Who hast set Thy glory above the heavens. 2 Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength because of Thine enemies, that Thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger. 3 When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; 4 What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him? 5 For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. 6 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet: 7 All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; 8 The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. 9 O LORD our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth!

the offering to God of trying our very hardest to do what is right, to live so that the light of His countenance is upon us, then we may fearlessly trust that whatever may happen to us is for the best. A touch of homely imagery in verse 7 conveys to us that David is thinking of something other than the changes and chances of worldly prosperity, and the thought brings the sense of infinite peace and trustfulness with which the Psalm closes.

Note on Ps. IV.

VIII. ח

לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל־הַגִּתִּית מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד׃

יְהוָה אֲדֹנֵינוּ מָה־אַדִּיר שִׁמְךָ בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־תְּנָה
הוֹדְךָ עַל־הַשָּׁמָיִם׃ 2 מִפִּי עוֹלֲלִים | וְיוֹנְקִים יִסַּדְתָּ
עֹז לְמַעַן צוֹרְרֶיךָ לְהַשְׁבִּית אוֹיֵב וּמִתְנַקֵּם׃ 3 כִּי־
אֶרְאֶה שָׁמֶיךָ מַעֲשֵׂה אֶצְבְּעֹתֶיךָ יָרֵחַ וְכוֹכָבִים אֲשֶׁר
כּוֹנָנְתָּה׃ 4 מָה־אֱנוֹשׁ כִּי־תִזְכְּרֶנּוּ וּבֶן־אָדָם כִּי תִפְקְדֶנּוּ׃
5 וַתְּחַסְּרֵהוּ מְעַט מֵאֱלֹהִים וְכָבוֹד וְהָדָר תְּעַטְּרֵהוּ׃
6 תַּמְשִׁילֵהוּ בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יָדֶיךָ כֹּל שַׁתָּה תַחַת־רַגְלָיו׃
7 צֹנָה וַאֲלָפִים כֻּלָּם וְגַם בַּהֲמוֹת שָׂדָי׃ 8 צִפּוֹר שָׁמַיִם
וְדְגֵי הַיָּם עֹבֵר אָרְחוֹת יַמִּים׃ 9 יְהוָה אֲדֹנֵינוּ מָה־
אַדִּיר שִׁמְךָ בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ׃

Note on Ps. VIII. The Psalmist is lost in wonder at God's loving care of us human beings. When we are little babies we cannot know God's goodness to us. When we grow older and understand God's loving care of us, we know that God has given us the beautiful world to live in, and all the living creatures on earth to serve us. We must try to deserve these great gifts of God by never misusing the power He has given us. It is a great trust, and we must try

PSALM XV.

A Psalm of David.

LORD, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in Thy holy hill? 2 He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. 3 He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his fellow, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour. 4 In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not. 5 He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

Note on Ps. XV. This Psalm reminds me of a story about Hillel, the wise Rabbi. A stranger came to him and asked him, "What is the Law of God?" Hillel answered, "What is hateful to thee, do not to thy fellow-man. That is the Law, all the rest is only to explain it."

not only to *say* our thanks to Him, but to *show* our thanks by being kind to all the creatures God has given us to take care of, and to make use of. Note on Ps. VIII.

The second verse of this Psalm tells "the enemy" (those who scornfully and foolishly forget the power and the goodness of God) to become wiser by watching how tiny babies grow and learn to use the powers given them by God's wonderful laws.

XV. טו

מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד׃

יְהוָה מִי־יָגוּר בְּאָהֳלֶךָ מִי־יִשְׁכֹּן בְּהַר קָדְשֶׁךָ׃ 2 הוֹלֵךְ
תָּמִים וּפֹעֵל צֶדֶק וְדֹבֵר אֱמֶת בִּלְבָבוֹ׃ 3 לֹא־רָגַל |
עַל־לְשֹׁנוֹ לֹא־עָשָׂה לְרֵעֵהוּ רָעָה וְחֶרְפָּה לֹא־נָשָׂא
עַל־קְרֹבוֹ׃ 4 נִבְזֶה | בְּעֵינָיו נִמְאָס וְאֶת־יִרְאֵי יְהוָה
יְכַבֵּד נִשְׁבַּע לְהָרַע וְלֹא יָמֵר׃ 5 כַּסְפּוֹ | לֹא־נָתַן
בְּנֶשֶׁךְ וְשֹׁחַד עַל־נָקִי לֹא־לָקָח עֹשֵׂה אֵלֶּה לֹא יִמּוֹט
לְעוֹלָם׃

In this Psalm David asks himself the great question, How can we please God, the Almighty Creator of the world? He finds the answer in thinking how we should guide our conduct in our every-day life. He says, Be honest and fair, always Note on Ps. XV.

Note on Ps. XV.

speak the truth and *think* the truth. Never let yourself even for a moment think of saying what is not *exactly* the truth. Drive such thoughts out of your heart. Never tell tales. Never break your promise, however hard it may be for you to keep it. Despise those who are dishonourable, but stand up for your friends. Never let yourself have nasty mean

PSALM XIX.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

THE heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handywork. 2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. 3 There is no speech nor language; without these is their voice heard. 4 Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath He set a tabernacle for the sun, 5 Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. 6 His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

7 The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. 8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. 9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous

thoughts in your heart. Always be kind and generous in helping others. David describes thus one who is always trying to do to others as he would like to be done by; who, as he is obeying the law of God, feels strong and firm, for his principles can never be moved, or shaken.

Note on Ps. XV.

XIX. יט

לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד׃

הַשָּׁמַיִם מְסַפְּרִים כְּבוֹד־אֵל וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו מַגִּיד הָרָקִיעַ׃
2 יוֹם לְיוֹם יַבִּיעַ אֹמֶר וְלַיְלָה לְלַיְלָה יְחַוֶּה־דָּעַת׃ 3 אֵין־
אֹמֶר וְאֵין דְּבָרִים בְּלִי נִשְׁמָע קוֹלָם׃ 4 בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ |
יָצָא קַוָּם וּבִקְצֵה תֵבֵל מִלֵּיהֶם לַשֶּׁמֶשׁ שָׂם־אֹהֶל בָּהֶם׃
5 וְהוּא כְּחָתָן יֹצֵא מֵחֻפָּתוֹ יָשִׂישׂ כְּגִבּוֹר לָרוּץ אֹרַח׃
6 מִקְצֵה הַשָּׁמַיִם | מוֹצָאוֹ וּתְקוּפָתוֹ עַל־קְצוֹתָם וְאֵין
נִסְתָּר מֵחַמָּתוֹ׃ 7 תּוֹרַת יְהוָה תְּמִימָה מְשִׁיבַת נָפֶשׁ
עֵדוּת יְהוָה נֶאֱמָנָה מַחְכִּימַת פֶּתִי׃ 8 פִּקּוּדֵי יְהוָה
יְשָׁרִים מְשַׂמְּחֵי־לֵב מִצְוַת יְהוָה בָּרָה מְאִירַת עֵינָיִם׃
9 יִרְאַת יְהוָה | טְהוֹרָה עוֹמֶדֶת לָעַד מִשְׁפְּטֵי־יְהוָה

Ps. XIX. altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

11 Moreover by them is Thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward. 12 Who can understand his errors? cleanse Thou me from secret faults. 13 Keep back Thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from great transgression. 14 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

Note on Ps. XIX. This Psalm is a very clear example of the way in which Hebrew poetry was usually written.

The verses do not rhyme, but one half of each verse makes a sort of echo, or contrast, to the other. Sometimes that plan is extended so that not only each verse is divided, but the Psalm as a whole is divided, one part contrasting with the other, and yet the whole making one poem, and leading up to one great thought.

Psalm xix. is full of oriental imagery.[1] The Psalmist exclaims that the heavens (if only we can read them) are like a book that tells the works of God. Day and night they wordlessly proclaim these wonders to all people all over the earth.

In the heavens God has placed His most marvellous creation, the Sun. By imagery the poet describes the joy of sunshine. It is like a strong

[1] For explanation of oriental imagery see Psalm cxxxiii.

Ps. XIX.

אֱמֶת צָדְקוּ יַחְדָּו׃ 10 הַנֶּחֱמָדִים מִזָּהָב וּמִפָּז רָב
וּמְתוּקִים מִדְּבַשׁ וְנֹפֶת צוּפִים׃ 11 גַּם־עַבְדְּךָ נִזְהָר
בָּהֶם בְּשָׁמְרָם עֵקֶב רָב׃ 12 שְׁגִיאוֹת מִי־יָבִין מִנִּסְתָּרוֹת
נַקֵּנִי׃ 13 גַּם מִזֵּדִים | חֲשֹׂךְ עַבְדֶּךָ אַל־יִמְשְׁלוּ־
בִי אָז אֵיתָם וְנִקֵּיתִי מִפֶּשַׁע רָב׃ 14 יִהְיוּ לְרָצוֹן |
אִמְרֵי־פִי וְהֶגְיוֹן לִבִּי לְפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה צוּרִי וְגוֹאֲלִי׃

Note on Ps. XIX.

man's joy in running a race; it is like the happiness of a bridegroom just married, as he steps from under the Huppah, or canopy. (Jewish brides and bridegrooms are still married under a Huppah, just as they were thousands of years ago when David wrote the Psalms!)

The description of the daily marvel of the sun, rising on one side of the earth and setting on the other, and thus warming and lighting the whole earth, completes the picture of the wonders of creation, for ever praising the Creator, and ends the first part of the Psalm.

The second part (beginning verse 7) describes the Infinite and merciful wisdom of God in relation to man. "The law of the Lord is perfect, moving the soul." It brings the souls of those who obey it near to God, even though they may have felt far off from Him before they tried to obey His law. "The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the

Note on Ps. XIX.

simple." Those who obey God's laws, though they may be neither clever nor learned, have a sure guide which is denied to those who rely only on their own wisdom. "The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart." To keep the statutes of the Lord, such as the commandments to rest ourselves and to let others rest on the Sabbath Day, not to covet our neighbours' goods, not to steal, not to say nasty things of other people,—these help every one of us to real happiness, and also help us to make the lives of others happy. "The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." The commandments of God make us see clearly the laws of Right and Wrong that are true for all people and for all time. "The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever." Fear is generally a thing to be ashamed of and to shake off as quickly as possible, but the fear of God is mingled with love and trust, and is a pure and right feeling. It should be always with us to warn us to resist if we feel tempted to do something we know to be wrong. The fear of the Lord is not such fear as is felt by a coward, who is ever seeking ease and safety for himself; but it is the consciousness of a humble-minded human being that his own strength and his own wisdom are not enough to make him strong and wise, unless he also obeys the laws that God in His Infinite wisdom has made for the conduct of our life. "The judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether." Whatever

sorrow, or pain, or disappointment we may have to bear, we should know it is the will of God, and try to bear it bravely, in the spirit of one of the Psalms, which says, "I know, O Lord, that Thy judgments are right, and that Thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me." We know that God has sent us our trials, and that He in His Infinite mercy will give us strength to bear them. As another Psalm says, "Be of good courage, and He will strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord." Note on Ps. XIX.

The tenth verse—extolling the judgments of God in simple but forcible imagery—ends the second part of the Psalm.

The third and last part expresses the crowning thought of the whole Psalm, the contrast between the Infinite wisdom of God and the limited wisdom of man. Here David tells us his own feelings, and shows his own fine character. He was hasty, but always ready to acknowledge his own sins, and humbly to pray for God's forgiveness when he knew he had done wrong. He says he will obey God's laws even when he does not understand them, in order to have the great reward of being saved from wrong-doing. "Who can understand his own errors?" he cries, and then he humbly prays to God to keep him from sinning, either wilfully or through ignorance. He ends with the prayer that his words and his thoughts may be pleasing to God.

PSALM XX.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

THE LORD hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee; 2 Send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion; 3 Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice; Selah. 4 Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel. 5 We will rejoice in Thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners: the LORD fulfil all thy petitions. 6 Now know I that the LORD saveth His anointed; He will hear him from His holy heaven with the saving strength of His right hand. 7 Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God. 8 They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright. 9 Save, LORD: let the King hear us when we call.

Note on Ps. XX. Trust in God whatever happens. That thought was always uppermost in David's mind. In joy and sorrow alike, it shines out in all his Psalms. It comforted him in all his troubles, and made him never lose courage. At a moment of great misery and danger, he said, "Ye that fear the Lord praise Him, for He hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, neither hath He hid His face from him, but when he crieth out to Him He heareth." And so in this Psalm, David prays for

XX. כ

לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד׃

יַעַנְךָ יְהוָה בְּיוֹם צָרָה יְשַׂגֶּבְךָ שֵׁם | אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב׃
2 יִשְׁלַח עֶזְרְךָ מִקֹּדֶשׁ וּמִצִּיּוֹן יִסְעָדֶךָּ׃ 3 יִזְכֹּר כָּל־מִנְחֹתֶיךָ
וְעוֹלָתְךָ יְדַשְּׁנֶה סֶלָה׃ 4 יִתֶּן־לְךָ כִלְבָבֶךָ וְכָל־עֲצָתְךָ
יְמַלֵּא׃ 5 נְרַנְּנָה | בִּישׁוּעָתֶךָ וּבְשֵׁם־אֱלֹהֵינוּ נִדְגֹּל יְמַלֵּא
יְהוָה כָּל־מִשְׁאֲלוֹתֶיךָ׃ 6 עַתָּה יָדַעְתִּי כִּי הוֹשִׁיעַ |
יְהוָה מְשִׁיחוֹ יַעֲנֵהוּ מִשְּׁמֵי קָדְשׁוֹ בִּגְבוּרוֹת יֵשַׁע יְמִינוֹ׃
7 אֵלֶּה בָרֶכֶב וְאֵלֶּה בַּסּוּסִים וַאֲנַחְנוּ | בְּשֵׁם־יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵינוּ נַזְכִּיר׃ 8 הֵמָּה כָּרְעוּ וְנָפָלוּ וַאֲנַחְנוּ קַמְנוּ
וַנִּתְעוֹדָד׃ 9 יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעָה הַמֶּלֶךְ יַעֲנֵנוּ בְיוֹם־קָרְאֵנוּ׃

God's blessing on his people, and he reminds them to set up their banners in the name of God, and to fight all life's battles bravely, ever trusting in God. Note on Ps. XX.

David described those who set up their banners in the name of God as "His anointed." This expression is a bit of poetic imagery;[1] that is of indirect description by means of a comparison which brings the poet's thought very clearly to our minds. In the land of Palestine, where King David lived,

[1] See Psalm cxxxiii.

Note on Ps. XX. that way of speaking by imagery is still used just as it was in his time, not only in poetry, but in ordinary conversation. In England we use it in poetry, but not in conversation.[1]

[1] Thus Tennyson, in describing a beautiful damsel, says:

". . . A brow
May blossom and a cheek of apple blossom."

And Shakespere, describing daybreak, says:

"Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain-tops."

PSALM XXIII.

A Psalm of David.

THE LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. 3 He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. 5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Note on Ps. XXIII. As we read this Psalm about God's care of us, we put our trust in Him, and feel we never shall be afraid

It was the custom in King David's time, and it still is the custom to anoint every monarch with oil at his coronation, as a sort of visible token of the prayer that God's blessing might be poured on the King like the oil that was being poured on him in the coronation ceremony. All of us are monarchs of our own conduct; and if we rule that with the thought of God and goodness ever in our minds, we, too, have His blessing poured on us, and are "His anointed." Note on Ps. XX.

XXIII. כג

מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד

יְהוָה רֹעִי לֹא אֶחְסָר׃ 2 בִּנְאוֹת דֶּשֶׁא יַרְבִּיצֵנִי עַל־
מֵי מְנֻחוֹת יְנַהֲלֵנִי׃ 3 נַפְשִׁי יְשׁוֹבֵב יַנְחֵנִי בְּמַעְגְּלֵי־
צֶדֶק לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ׃ 4 גַּם כִּי־אֵלֵךְ בְּגֵיא צַלְמָוֶת לֹא־
אִירָא רָע כִּי־אַתָּה עִמָּדִי שִׁבְטְךָ וּמִשְׁעַנְתֶּךָ הֵמָּה
יְנַחֲמֻנִי׃ 5 תַּעֲרֹךְ לְפָנַי | שֻׁלְחָן נֶגֶד צֹרְרָי דִּשַּׁנְתָּ
בַשֶּׁמֶן רֹאשִׁי כּוֹסִי רְוָיָה׃ 6 אַךְ | טוֹב וָחֶסֶד יִרְדְּפוּנִי
כָּל־יְמֵי חַיָּי וְשַׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית־יְהוָה לְאֹרֶךְ יָמִים׃

of anything; because God is always taking care of us and will always help us. Note on Ps. XXIII.

Note on Ps. XXIII.

FOR OLDER CHILDREN.—The series of simple word-pictures in this idyllic Psalm convey the poet's thoughts to our minds with a quite indescribable charm and vividness. It appeals to all, young and old alike, by reason of the simplicity of its imagery and the force and fervour of the pervading idea—trust in the goodness of God—ever the key-note of David's religion and of all his Psalms.

The fourth verse helps us to try to be brave and

PSALM XXIV.

A Psalm of David.

THE earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. 2 For He hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. 3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in His holy place? 4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. 5 He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. 6 This is the generation of them that seek Him, that seek Thy face, O Jacob. Selah. 7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye doors of the universe; and the King of glory shall come in. 8 Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. 9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and lift ye the doors of the universe; and the King of glory shall come in. 10 Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, He is the King of glory. Selah.

patient when trouble comes to us, and not to let our minds dwell on the thought of how unlucky we are, or how miserable we feel. Our trouble gives us pain like a rod beating us, but our trust in the mercy and lovingkindness of God is like a staff supporting us under our load of trouble; and when we have to bear that load, we learn to know the comfort of the Staff that supports us and gives us strength.

Note on Ps. XXIII.

XXIV. כד

לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר

לַיהוָה הָאָרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהּ תֵּבֵל וְיֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ׃ 2 כִּי־הוּא
עַל־יַמִּים יְסָדָהּ וְעַל־נְהָרוֹת יְכוֹנְנֶהָ׃ 3 מִי־יַעֲלֶה
בְּהַר־יְהוָה וּמִי־יָקוּם בִּמְקוֹם קָדְשׁוֹ׃ 4 נְקִי כַפַּיִם
וּבַר־לֵבָב אֲשֶׁר לֹא־נָשָׂא לַשָּׁוְא נַפְשִׁי וְלֹא נִשְׁבַּע
לְמִרְמָה׃ 5 יִשָּׂא בְרָכָה מֵאֵת יְהוָה וּצְדָקָה מֵאֱלֹהֵי
יִשְׁעוֹ׃ 6 זֶה דּוֹר דֹּרְשָׁיו מְבַקְשֵׁי פָנֶיךָ יַעֲקֹב סֶלָה׃
7 שְׂאוּ שְׁעָרִים | רָאשֵׁיכֶם וְהִנָּשְׂאוּ פִּתְחֵי עוֹלָם וְיָבוֹא
מֶלֶךְ הַכָּבוֹד׃ 8 מִי־זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַכָּבוֹד יְהוָה עִזּוּז וְגִבּוֹר
יְהוָה גִּבּוֹר מִלְחָמָה׃ 9 שְׂאוּ שְׁעָרִים | רָאשֵׁיכֶם וְשְׂאוּ
פִּתְחֵי עוֹלָם וְיָבֹא מֶלֶךְ הַכָּבוֹד׃ 10 מִי הוּא זֶה מֶלֶךְ
הַכָּבוֹד יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת הוּא מֶלֶךְ הַכָּבוֹד סֶלָה׃

Note on Ps. XXIV.

Musing on the marvellous works of God, David asks himself what sort of man can make his life acceptable to his Creator.

In twenty wonderful words he completely answers his own question. "He that hath clean hands" (who never lets his hands do what he knows is wrong), "and a pure heart" (who desires to be just and kind and generous); "who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity" (who does whatever he undertakes not merely in order to bring himself glory, but to try to serve his fellow-creatures), "nor sworn deceitfully"

PSALM XXV.

A Psalm of David.

UNTO Thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul. 2 O my God, I trust in Thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me. 3 Yea, let none that wait on Thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause. 4 Shew me Thy ways, O LORD; teach me Thy paths. 5 Lead me in Thy truth, and teach me: for Thou art the God of my salvation; on Thee do I wait all the day. 6 Remember, O LORD, Thy tender mercies and Thy lovingkindnesses; for they have been ever of old. 7 Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to Thy mercy remember Thou me for Thy goodness' sake, O LORD. 8 Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will He teach sinners in the way. 9 The meek will He guide in judgment: and the meek will He teach His way. 10 All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as

(who always speaks the truth). Such, David adds, is the generation of seekers after God, "of the seekers of Thy face" (i.e. Thy favour). And he calls the children of Israel (Jacob) to witness—for to them the knowledge of the Law of Goodness had been given to make it known to all mankind. In a glowing image he exhorts his own generation to seek the Lord—to lift the iron gates and open the heavy doors of sloth and selfishness, that the glory of the Lord may enter into the soul of man.

Note on Ps. XXIV

XXV. כה

לְדָוִד

אֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה נַפְשִׁי אֶשָּׂא׃ 2 אֱלֹהַי בְּךָ בָטַחְתִּי
אַל־אֵבוֹשָׁה אַל־יַעַלְזוּ אוֹיְבַי לִי׃ 3 גַּם כָּל־קֹוֶיךָ
לֹא יֵבֹשׁוּ יֵבֹשׁוּ הַבּוֹגְדִים רֵיקָם׃ 4 דְּרָכֶיךָ יְהוָה
הוֹדִיעֵנִי אֹרְחוֹתֶיךָ לַמְּדֵנִי׃ 5 הַדְרִיכֵנִי בַאֲמִתֶּךָ |
וְלַמְּדֵנִי כִּי־אַתָּה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעִי אוֹתְךָ קִוִּיתִי כָּל־הַיּוֹם׃
6 זְכָר־רַחֲמֶיךָ יְהוָה וַחֲסָדֶיךָ כִּי מֵעוֹלָם הֵמָּה׃
7 חַטֹּאות נְעוּרַי | וּפְשָׁעַי אַל־תִּזְכֹּר כְּחַסְדְּךָ זְכָר־
לִי־אַתָּה לְמַעַן טּוּבְךָ יְהוָה׃ 8 טּוב־וְיָשָׁר יְהוָה עַל־
כֵּן יוֹרֶה חַטָּאִים בַּדָּרֶךְ׃ 9 יַדְרֵךְ עֲנָוִים בַּמִּשְׁפָּט
וִילַמֵּד עֲנָוִים דַּרְכּוֹ׃ 10 כָּל־אָרְחוֹת יְהוָה חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת

Ps. XXV. keep His covenant and His testimonies. 11 For Thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great. 12 What man is he that feareth the LORD? him shall He teach in the way that He shall choose. 13 His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth. 14 The secret of the LORD is with them that fear Him; and He will shew them His covenant. 15 Mine eyes are ever toward the LORD; for He shall pluck my feet out of the net. 16 Turn Thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate and afflicted. 17 The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring Thou me out of my distresses. 18 Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins. 19 Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred. 20 O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed: for I put my trust in Thee. 21 Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on Thee. 22 Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

Notes on Ps. XXV. This Psalm, like many others, shows how David's perfect trust in God's goodness gave him courage under all his trials. He prays to be led to try to do right; "Lead me in Thy truth and teach me," and then he feels confident that God in His Infinite mercy will forgive him for whatever he does wrong. Feeling how blind we poor mortals are, and how little we know compared with God, he invokes the Infinite power and wisdom of God, and trusting in His Infinite lovingkindness, he says,

Ps. XXV.

לְנִצְרֵי בְרִיתוֹ וְעֵדֹתָיו׃ 11 לְמַעַן־שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה וְסָלַחְתָּ
לַעֲוֹנִי כִּי רַב־הוּא׃ 12 מִי זֶה הָאִישׁ יְרֵא יְהוָה יוֹרֶנּוּ
בְּדֶרֶךְ יִבְחָר׃ 13 נַפְשׁוֹ בְּטוֹב תָּלִין וְזַרְעוֹ יִירַשׁ
אָרֶץ׃ 14 סוֹד יְהוָה לִירֵאָיו וּבְרִיתוֹ לְהוֹדִיעָם׃
15 עֵינַי תָּמִיד אֶל־יְהוָה כִּי־הוּא יוֹצִיא מֵרֶשֶׁת
רַגְלָי׃ 16 פְּנֵה־אֵלַי וְחָנֵּנִי כִּי־יָחִיד וְעָנִי אָנִי׃
17 צָרוֹת לְבָבִי הִרְחִיבוּ מִמְּצוּקוֹתַי הוֹצִיאֵנִי׃ 18 רְאֵה־
עָנְיִי וַעֲמָלִי וְשָׂא לְכָל־חַטֹּאתָי׃ 19 רְאֵה אוֹיְבַי כִּי־רָבּוּ
וְשִׂנְאַת חָמָס שְׂנֵאוּנִי׃ 20 שָׁמְרָה נַפְשִׁי וְהַצִּילֵנִי
אַל־אֵבוֹשׁ כִּי־חָסִיתִי בָךְ׃ 21 תֹּם־וָיֹשֶׁר יִצְּרוּנִי כִּי
קִוִּיתִיךָ׃ 22 פְּדֵה־אֱלֹהִים אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכֹּל צָרוֹתָיו׃

Note on Ps. XXV.

"the meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach His way."

Verses 16, 17, 18, and 19 describe the troubles that assail us all. The enemies of which David speaks are, as often as not, within ourselves—our own sins and foibles. These are our worst enemies.

"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." To have the thought of trying to obey God's laws ever in one's mind, to hold fast to it at all

Note on Ps. XXV.

times, in trouble and in joy—that is the secret of the Lord, and whoever has it understands God's covenant with mankind.

So David prays with perfect faith; "O bring Thou me out of my distresses," and not only for himself but for all his kindred and his people; "Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles."

David's own self seems to be brought very near us. We feel as if we know him, and can almost

PSALM XXIX.

A Psalm of David.

GIVE unto the LORD, O ye sons of the mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength. 2 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto His name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

3 The voice of the LORD is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the LORD is upon many waters. 4 The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty. 5 The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the cedars of Lebanon. 6 He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young buffalo. 7 The voice of the LORD divideth the flames of fire. 8 The voice of the LORD shaketh the wilderness; the LORD shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh. 9 The voice of the LORD

hear his voice. He speaks to us, not like a poet-king who lived thousands of years ago in a far-off land, but like a familiar friend who comforts us when we are unhappy by telling us of the difficulties and troubles he has gone through. We see that his difficulties were just the same as ours are, and that the perfect trust in the goodness of God that helped him and gave him courage, will help and support us too.

Note on Ps. XXV.

XXIX. כט

מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד

הָבוּ לַיהוָה בְּנֵי אֵלִים הָבוּ לַיהוָה כָּבוֹד וָעֹז׃
2 הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ הִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לַיהוָה בְּהַדְרַת־
קֹדֶשׁ׃ 3 קוֹל יְהוָה עַל־הַמָּיִם אֵל־הַכָּבוֹד הִרְעִים
יְהוָה עַל־מַיִם רַבִּים׃ 4 קוֹל־יְהוָה בַּכֹּחַ קוֹל
יְהוָה בֶּהָדָר׃ 5 קוֹל יְהוָה שֹׁבֵר אֲרָזִים וַיְשַׁבֵּר
יְהוָה אֶת־אַרְזֵי הַלְּבָנוֹן׃ 6 וַיַּרְקִידֵם כְּמוֹ־עֵגֶל
לְבָנוֹן וְשִׂרְיֹון כְּמוֹ בֶן־רְאֵמִים׃ 7 קוֹל־יְהוָה חֹצֵב
לַהֲבוֹת אֵשׁ׃ 8 קוֹל יְהוָה יָחִיל מִדְבָּר יָחִיל יְהוָה
מִדְבַּר קָדֵשׁ׃ 9 קוֹל יְהוָה | יְחוֹלֵל אַיָּלוֹת וַיֶּחֱשֹׂף

Ps. XXIX. maketh the hinds to calve, and layeth bare the forests: and in His temple doth all speak of His glory. 10 The LORD sat enthroned at the Flood; yea, the LORD sitteth as King for ever. 11 The LORD will give strength unto His people; the LORD will bless His people with peace.

Note on Ps. XXIX. This Psalm describes how a great storm shows the power of God. But we do not fear the storm for we feel that we, like the storm, are the work of God, and that He is taking care of us at all times, in calm and in storm; so the very storm itself gives us a sense of peace and safety.

Note for Older Children.—Psalm xxix. consists of three parts. The first, an invocation to mankind to realize the power and grandeur of the Almighty. The second, a vivid description of a storm as an illustration of the power of God. The last, beginning in the middle of the 9th verse, gives a yet greater sense of the power of God by its sudden change from telling of the storm raging over sea and land, to telling of

PSALM XXXII.

A Psalm of David.

BLESSED is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. 2 Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. 3 When I kept silent, my

Ps. XXIX.

יְעָרוֹת וּבְהֵיכָלוֹ כֻּלּוֹ אֹמֵר כָּבוֹד׃ 10 יְהוָה לַמַּבּוּל
יָשָׁב וַיֵּשֶׁב יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ לְעוֹלָם׃ 11 יְהוָה עֹז לְעַמּוֹ
יִתֵּן יְהוָה ׀ יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ בַשָּׁלוֹם׃

Note on Ps. XXIX.

God the Ruler of the storm, glorified in His Temple, (i.e. in Heaven,) protecting the dwellers on earth, the Prince of Peace.

The three thoughts presented to our minds by the glowing imagery of these three pictures, culminating in the thought of Divine Peace, are a typical example of the genius of ancient Hebrew poetry.

The word "Give" in the first and second verses of this Psalm does not mean "give" in the literal sense, but rather "ascribe" or "understand and acknowledge that"—. The Hebrew word קול (the same root and the same word as the English "call"), means "voice," and, associated with the name of God, means "thunder."

XXXII. לב

לְדָוִד מַשְׂכִּיל

אַשְׁרֵי נְשׂוּי־פֶשַׁע כְּסוּי חֲטָאָה׃ 2 אַשְׁרֵי־אָדָם
לֹא־יַחְשֹׁב יְהוָה לוֹ עָוֹן וְאֵין בְּרוּחוֹ רְמִיָּה׃
3 כִּי הֶחֱרַשְׁתִּי בָּלוּ עַצְמַי בְּשַׁאֲגָתִי כָּל־הַיּוֹם׃

Ps. XXXII. bones waxed old through my groaning all the day long. 4 For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah. 5 I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

6 For this shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee in a time when Thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto Him. 7 Thou art my hiding place; Thou shalt preserve me from trouble; Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.

8 I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will counsel thee with mine eye upon thee. 9 Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

10 Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about. 11 Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.

Note on Ps. XXXII. Over and over again in the Psalms David owns that he has done wrong and prays humbly for forgiveness, with perfect trust that if he is truly sorry and determined to turn from evil and do right, God will forgive him.

Ps. XXXII.

4 כִּי | יוֹמָם וָלַיְלָה תִּכְבַּד עָלַי יָדֶךָ נֶהְפַּךְ לְשַׁדִּי
בְּחַרְבֹנֵי־קָיִץ סֶלָה : 5 חַטָּאתִי אוֹדִיעֲךָ וַעֲוֹנִי לֹא־
כִסִּיתִי אָמַרְתִּי אוֹדֶה עֲלֵי פְשָׁעַי לַיהוָה וְאַתָּה |
נָשָׂאתָ עֲוֹן חַטָּאתִי סֶלָה : 6 עַל־זֹאת יִתְפַּלֵּל כָּל־
חָסִיד | אֵלֶיךָ לְעֵת מְצֹא רַק לְשֵׁטֶף מַיִם רַבִּים
אֵלָיו לֹא יַגִּיעוּ : 7 אַתָּה סֵתֶר לִי מִצַּר תִּצְּרֵנִי
רָנֵּי פַלֵּט תְּסוֹבְבֵנִי סֶלָה : 8 אַשְׂכִּילְךָ | וְאוֹרְךָ
בְּדֶרֶךְ־זוּ תֵלֵךְ אִיעֲצָה עָלֶיךָ עֵינִי : 9 אַל־תִּהְיוּ |
כְּסוּס כְּפֶרֶד אֵין הָבִין בְּמֶתֶג־וָרֶסֶן עֶדְיָו לִבְלוֹם בַּל
קְרוֹב אֵלֶיךָ : 10 רַבִּים מַכְאוֹבִים לָרָשָׁע וְהַבּוֹטֵחַ
בַּיהוָה חֶסֶד יְסוֹבְבֶנּוּ : 11 שִׂמְחוּ בַיהוָה וְגִילוּ צַדִּיקִים
וְהַרְנִינוּ כָּל־יִשְׁרֵי־לֵב :

Note on Ps. XXXII.

When David knew he had done wrong, he was miserable as long as he kept silent. In this Psalm he expresses the misery of his mind by describing the misery of his body. His bones ached, he groaned with pain, his skin was parched with fever.

Note on Ps. XXXII.

Then he confessed his sins to God, "and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." He knew that humble and whole-hearted acknowledgment of sin to God is the essence of repentance, and the beginning of amendment. This story of his own experience forms the first part of the Psalm.

In the second part, beginning verse 6, David calls on all who are godly (i.e. all who desire to be good) to learn by his lesson to confess their sins to God "in the time when Thou mayest be found." That means whilst the sin of their wrong-doing is clear in their minds; for repetition of evil deeds is apt to make people blind to their own wickedness, and then God cannot be found, because the blindness of the sinner to his own guilt prevents him from making that humble and whole-hearted confession of his sin that carries him far towards Divine forgiveness and help.

When this awful moral blindness overwhelms us we cannot find, because we cannot seek God's help. Also,—"in the floods of the great waters"—(*i.e.* when we are well nigh overwhelmed with some great catastrophe suddenly happening to us) we often cannot all at once find comfort in perfect trust in God, unless in the calm time of our ordinary life we have tried to think daily of God and His Goodness, and have made constant effort to order our conduct by the light of that lofty ideal. That is the thought suggested and implied by the second half of verse 6.

The history of the world furnishes many examples of men who have succumbed to the great moral danger of becoming accustomed to allowing themselves to sin. Thus King Henry VIII. ascended the throne full of high resolves to set an example of virtue. By degrees he grew deaf to the voice of conscience when he was tempted to do evil, and

became a prey to ungovernable passions. Robespierre, who began life with a great sense of the awful responsibility of shedding human blood, gradually became the most reckless and callous of murderers.

David well understood this danger, and all through his life strove earnestly against it. After he became a great and powerful king, when Nathan the prophet rebuked him for a sin he had committed, he composed one of the most beautiful of all his Psalms, the fifty-first, imploring God's pardon, and the help of His holy spirit, the spirit of goodness.

The seventh verse ends this part of Psalm xxxii. with the courage-giving thought that whatever happens, God's succour is with them that trust in Him.

In the third part of the Psalm the poet (like Dante and Milton in later ages) imagines that God Himself is speaking, and guiding the human mind to perceive and to pursue the path of goodness. For the Divine gift to man of the power of understanding Right and Wrong and of controlling his actions by that power is well-nigh lost if man needs to be driven along the right path by outward force like a horse or a mule.

The fourth and final part (verses 10 and 11) is the climax of the whole poem,—a picture of the perfect happiness of the soul of all who try their best to do right.

Psalm xxxii. is a fine example of the construction of a Hebrew poem. Each verse is divided into two parts, one of which illustrates or amplifies the other, and each part of the Psalm has its own thread of thought, but the whole leads up to and culminates in the one great comprehensive moral reflection of the closing verses.

PSALM XXXIII.

REJOICE in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright. 2 Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto Him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings. 3 Sing unto Him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise. 4 For the word of the LORD is right; and all His works are done in truth. 5 He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD. 6 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. 7 He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: He layeth up the depth in storehouses. 8 Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. 9 For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. 10 The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: He maketh the devices of the people of none effect. 11 The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever; the thoughts of His heart to all generations. 12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance. 13 The LORD looketh from heaven; He beholdeth all the sons of men. 14 From the place of His habitation He looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth. 15 He fashioneth their hearts alike; He considereth all their works. 16 There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a

XXXIII. לג

רַנְּנוּ צַדִּיקִים בַּיהוָה לַיְשָׁרִים נָאוָה תְהִלָּה׃
2 הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה בְּכִנּוֹר בְּנֵבֶל עָשׂוֹר זַמְּרוּ־לוֹ׃
3 שִׁירוּ־לוֹ שִׁיר חָדָשׁ הֵיטִיבוּ נַגֵּן בִּתְרוּעָה׃ 4 כִּי־
יָשָׁר דְּבַר־יְהוָה וְכָל־מַעֲשֵׂהוּ בֶּאֱמוּנָה׃ 5 אֹהֵב צְדָקָה
וּמִשְׁפָּט חֶסֶד יְהוָה מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ׃ 6 בִּדְבַר יְהוָה
שָׁמַיִם נַעֲשׂוּ וּבְרוּחַ פִּיו כָּל־צְבָאָם׃ 7 כֹּנֵס כַּנֵּד מֵי
הַיָּם נֹתֵן בְּאוֹצָרוֹת תְּהוֹמוֹת׃ 8 יִירְאוּ מֵיְהוָה כָּל־
הָאָרֶץ מִמֶּנּוּ יָגוּרוּ כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל׃ 9 כִּי הוּא אָמַר
וַיֶּהִי הוּא־צִוָּה וַיַּעֲמֹד׃ 10 יְהוָה הֵפִיר עֲצַת־גּוֹיִם הֵנִיא
מַחְשְׁבוֹת עַמִּים׃ 11 עֲצַת יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם תַּעֲמֹד
מַחְשְׁבוֹת לִבּוֹ לְדֹר וָדֹר׃ 12 אַשְׁרֵי הַגּוֹי אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה
אֱלֹהָיו הָעָם ו בָּחַר לַנַּחֲלָה לוֹ׃ 13 מִשָּׁמַיִם הִבִּיט
יְהוָה רָאָה אֶת־כָּל־בְּנֵי הָאָדָם׃ 14 מִמְּכוֹן־שִׁבְתּוֹ
הִשְׁגִּיחַ אֶל כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ׃ 15 הַיֹּצֵר יַחַד לִבָּם
הַמֵּבִין אֶל־כָּל־מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם׃ 16 אֵין הַמֶּלֶךְ נוֹשָׁע בְּרָב־
חָיִל גִּבּוֹר לֹא־יִנָּצֵל בְּרָב־כֹּחַ׃ 17 שֶׁקֶר הַסּוּס

Ps. XXXIII. mighty man is not delivered by much strength. 17 A horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength. 18 Behold the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy; 19 To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. 20 Our soul waiteth for the LORD: He is our help and our shield. 21 For our heart shall rejoice in Him, because we have trusted in His holy name. 22 Let Thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in Thee.

Note on Ps. XXXIII. The first verse calls on the righteous to rejoice in the thought of God.

Rejoicing is a characteristic of the righteous, for goodness and happiness go together, just as evil is ever to be found in company with discontentedness and grumbling.

The Jewish religion is a religion of cheerfulness begotten by faith in the perfection of the wisdom and lovingkindness of God (such faith as is breathed in the fourth and fifth verses of this Psalm) and faith also in His infinite and universal power.

The twelfth verse finds an echo in the heart of every Israelite conscious of the God-given heritage of his people, the task and duty of making known to the world through all time that God alone is the Creator and Ruler of the universe and all that is therein.

For the world and all its wonders are the work of God, and His work and His laws last for ever by reason of their unalterable greatness and wisdom. How different to human work! But if we remember

לְתִשׁוּעָה וּבְרֹב חֵילוֹ לֹא יְמַלֵּט׃ 18 הִנֵּה עֵין יְהוָה Ps. XXXIII.
אֶל־יְרֵאָיו לַמְיַחֲלִים לְחַסְדּוֹ׃ 19 לְהַצִּיל מִמָּוֶת
נַפְשָׁם וּלְחַיּוֹתָם בָּרָעָב׃ 20 נַפְשֵׁנוּ חִכְּתָה לַיהוָה
עֶזְרֵנוּ וּמָגִנֵּנוּ הוּא׃ 21 כִּי־בוֹ יִשְׂמַח לִבֵּנוּ כִּי בְשֵׁם
קָדְשׁוֹ בָטָחְנוּ׃ 22 יְהִי־חַסְדְּךָ יְהוָה עָלֵינוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר
יִחַלְנוּ לָךְ׃

and always try to obey the laws God has given to us (and through Israel to the whole world), He will bless us. For God knows the heart of every one of us:—"He fashioneth their hearts alike, He considereth all their works," means that He has given to every human being the power to try to do right, and He knows all our temptations to do wrong, and all our efforts to resist them. Note on Ps. XXXIII.

Our own bodily strength, or the strength of soldiers and horses, however strong they may be, cannot save any one of us; for sorrow and misfortune, disease and death, may come upon us at all times. Where then is our strength? The Psalmist answers:—"Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy, to deliver their *soul* from death and to keep them alive in famine. Our *soul* waiteth for the Lord. He is our Help and our Shield."

The Jewish conception of man's spiritual destiny—the safety of his *soul* as opposed to mere bodily safety—is forcibly told in these verses.

Note on Ps. XXXIII

Strength comes to us to face all manner of dangers and trials if we live our lives with "our souls waiting for the Lord," always trying to obey the eternal laws of right and wrong by resisting all temptation to do what we know is wrong, and ever striving to do what we know is right.

That is the attitude of mind and conscience that the Psalmist pictures in verses 18, 19, 20, and 21,—

PSALM XXXIV.

A Psalm of David when he feigned madness before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he departed.

I WILL bless the LORD at all times: His praise shall continually be in my mouth. 2 My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. 3 O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together. 4 I sought the LORD, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. 5 They looked unto Him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. 6 This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. 7 The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them. 8 O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him. 9 O fear the LORD, ye His saints: for there is no want to them that fear Him. 10 The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing. 11 Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach

summing up all in the words, "because we have trusted in His holy name." Note on Ps. XXXIII

When we are in trouble or in danger we gather courage and comfort from saying this Psalm, and from praying to God the prayer of the last verse, "May Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we hope in Thee."

XXXIV. לד

לְדָוִד בְּשַׁנּוֹתוֹ אֶת־טַעְמוֹ לִפְנֵי אֲבִימֶלֶךְ
וַיְגָרְשֵׁהוּ וַיֵּלַךְ׃

אֲבָרְכָה אֶת־יְהוָה בְּכָל־עֵת תָּמִיד תְּהִלָּתוֹ בְּפִי׃
2 בַּיהוָה תִּתְהַלֵּל נַפְשִׁי יִשְׁמְעוּ עֲנָוִים וְיִשְׂמָחוּ׃
3 גַּדְּלוּ לַיהוָה אִתִּי וּנְרוֹמְמָה שְׁמוֹ יַחְדָּו׃ 4 דָּרַשְׁתִּי
אֶת־יְהוָה וְעָנָנִי וּמִכָּל־מְגוּרוֹתַי הִצִּילָנִי׃ 5 הִבִּיטוּ
אֵלָיו וְנָהָרוּ וּפְנֵיהֶם אַל־יֶחְפָּרוּ׃ 6 זֶה עָנִי קָרָא
וַיהוָה שָׁמֵעַ וּמִכָּל־צָרוֹתָיו הוֹשִׁיעוֹ׃ 7 חֹנֶה מַלְאַךְ־
יְהוָה סָבִיב לִירֵאָיו וַיְחַלְּצֵם׃ 8 טַעֲמוּ וּרְאוּ כִּי־טוֹב
יְהוָה אַשְׁרֵי הַגֶּבֶר יֶחֱסֶה־בּוֹ׃ 9 יְרָאוּ אֶת־יְהוָה
קְדֹשָׁיו כִּי אֵין מַחְסוֹר לִירֵאָיו׃ 10 כְּפִירִים רָשׁוּ וְרָעֵבוּ
וְדֹרְשֵׁי יְהוָה לֹא־יַחְסְרוּ כָל־טוֹב׃ 11 לְכוּ־בָנִים שִׁמְעוּ־

Ps. XXXIV. you the fear of the LORD. 12 What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? 13 Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. 14 Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. 15 The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry. 16 The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. 17 They cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. 18 The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. 19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all. 20 He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken. 21 Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be condemned. 22 The LORD redeemeth the soul of His servants: and none of them that trust in Him shall be condemned.

Note on Ps. XXXIV. When David wrote this Psalm he was in great misery. He had been unjustly driven away from his own country, and was a homeless wanderer; and King Saul, his great enemy, was trying to kill him. But David did not lose his trust in God. He said, "I will bless the Lord at all times," and, praying trustfully to God, he was "delivered from all his fears," except the fear of God, which brings the knowledge of Right and Wrong.

David calls on others to learn the fear of God, as he had learnt it in the time of his trouble, and

Ps. XXXIV.

לִי יִרְאַת יְהוָה אֲלַמֶּדְכֶם׃ 12 מִי־הָאִישׁ הֶחָפֵץ חַיִּים
אֹהֵב יָמִים לִרְאוֹת טוֹב׃ 13 נְצֹר לְשׁוֹנְךָ מֵרָע
וּשְׂפָתֶיךָ מִדַּבֵּר מִרְמָה׃ 14 סוּר מֵרָע וַעֲשֵׂה־טוֹב בַּקֵּשׁ
שָׁלוֹם וְרָדְפֵהוּ׃ 15 עֵינֵי יְהוָה אֶל־צַדִּיקִים וְאָזְנָיו
אֶל־שַׁוְעָתָם׃ 16 פְּנֵי יְהוָה בְּעֹשֵׂי רָע לְהַכְרִית מֵאֶרֶץ
זִכְרָם׃ 17 צָעֲקוּ וַיהוָה שָׁמֵעַ וּמִכָּל צָרוֹתָם הִצִּילָם׃
18 קָרוֹב יְהוָה לְנִשְׁבְּרֵי־לֵב וְאֶת־דַּכְּאֵי־רוּחַ יוֹשִׁיעַ׃
19 רַבּוֹת רָעוֹת צַדִּיק וּמִכֻּלָּם יַצִּילֶנּוּ יְהוָה׃
20 שֹׁמֵר כָּל־עַצְמוֹתָיו אַחַת מֵהֵנָּה לֹא נִשְׁבָּרָה׃
21 תְּמוֹתֵת רָשָׁע רָעָה וְשֹׂנְאֵי צַדִּיק יֶאְשָׁמוּ׃
22 פּוֹדֶה יְהוָה נֶפֶשׁ עֲבָדָיו וְלֹא יֶאְשְׁמוּ כָּל־הַחֹסִים
בּוֹ׃

Note on Ps. XXXIV.

to know the true happiness which no human sorrow can destroy. He saw that the real misery of life is hating and trying to hurt each other; but that if we "taste" with our feelings, and "see" with our mind's eye, we shall understand the goodness of the Lord, and always trust in Him whatever evil may happen.

Then comes David's practical advice, which makes us feel how earnestly he himself had thought and sought to find the right way to live, till at last he saw it clearly. "Keep thy tongue from evil," he

Note on Ps. XXXIV.

says—whether the evil be true or not. How often quarrels would be avoided if every one did this! "Keep thy lips from speaking guile." Take care that what you say is not only true, but that it cannot mean anything but the truth. But David is not content merely to tell us what we should *not* do. He does not only say "Depart from evil," he adds "and do good." He knew that the best way to depart from evil is to set about doing good. To get rid of bad and wicked feelings, we must turn all our thoughts to trying to do something kind and good for some one else. "Seek peace and pursue it." It is not enough just to keep from making others angry; if others are angry we must try hard to soothe their anger.

Verse 16 says, "The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth." The usual translation of the next verse begins, "The righteous cry," but the Hebrew means, "they cry," namely those who

PSALM XXXIX.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

(A Prayer in Time of Illness or Grief.)

I SAID, I will guard my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will guard my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me. 2 I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred. 3 My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue, 4 LORD, make me to know

do evil,—"and the Lord heareth and saveth them out of all their troubles." David knew well that none of us are perfect, that we all do wrong at times; but his complete faith in the gracious mercy of God made him know also that if we have done evil and are truly sorry and pray to God, He will hear us and "save us out of all our troubles." For the Lord is nigh to those who are truly sorry and "broken-hearted" for having done wrong, and will save those who really try hard to turn from their evil ways and do better,—or as David puts it, "such as be of a contrite spirit."

Note on Ps. XXXIV.

So David ends his prayer with the comforting thought that "none of them that trust in the Lord shall be condemned."

The argument of the last four verses appeals to us all in our daily experiences of anxiety and disappointment, and inspires us as it did David with hope and courage, and with faith to "bless the Lord at all times."

XXXIX. לט

לַמְנַצֵּחַ לִידוּתוּן מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד׃

אָמַרְתִּי אֶשְׁמְרָה דְרָכַי מֵהַחֲטוֹא בִלְשׁוֹנִי אֶשְׁמְרָה לְפִי
מַחְסוֹם בְּעוֹד רָשָׁע לְנֶגְדִּי׃ 2 נֶאֱלַמְתִּי דוּמִיָּה הֶחֱשֵׁיתִי
מִטּוֹב וּכְאֵבִי נֶעְכָּר׃ 3 חַם־לִבִּי | בְּקִרְבִּי בַּהֲגִיגִי תִבְעַר־
אֵשׁ דִּבַּרְתִּי בִלְשׁוֹנִי׃ 4 הוֹדִיעֵנִי | יְהוָה | קִצִּי וּמִדַּת

Ps. XXXIX. mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am. 5 Behold, thou hast made my days as an hand-breadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah. 6 Surely every man walketh in a vain show: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them. 7 And now, LORD, what wait I for? my hope is in thee. 8 Deliver me from all my transgressions: make me not the reproach of the foolish. 9 I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because Thou didst it. 10 Remove Thy stroke away from me; I am consumed by the blow of Thine hand. 11 When Thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, Thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity. Selah. 12 Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; hold not Thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with Thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were. 13 O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.

Note on Ps. XXXIX. In great sorrow, or in great suffering, when Death has come very near to us or to those we love best, this Psalm seems to bring a solemn peace into our souls like the sound of very lovely music.

The answering words to the prayer of verse 4 make each of us, young and old alike, feel as a little

Ps. XXXIX.

יָמַי מַה־חֵיא אֶדְעָה מֶה־חָדֵל אָנִי׃ 5 הִנֵּה טְפָחוֹת |
נָתַתָּה יָמַי וְחֶלְדִּי כְאַיִן נֶגְדֶּךָ אַךְ־כָּל־הֶבֶל כָּל־
אָדָם נִצָּב־סֶלָה׃ 6 אַךְ־בְּצֶלֶם | יִתְהַלֵּךְ־אִישׁ אַךְ־הֶבֶל
יֶהֱמָיוּן יִצְבֹּר וְלֹא־יֵדַע מִי־אֹסְפָם׃ 7 וְעַתָּה מַה־קִּוִּיתִי
אֲדֹנָי תּוֹחַלְתִּי לְךָ הִיא׃ 8 מִכָּל־פְּשָׁעַי הַצִּילֵנִי
חֶרְפַּת נָבָל אַל־תְּשִׂימֵנִי׃ 9 נֶאֱלַמְתִּי לֹא אֶפְתַּח־
פִּי כִּי אַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ׃ 10 הָכֵר מֵעָלַי נִגְעֶךָ מִתִּגְרַת
יָדְךָ אֲנִי כָלִיתִי׃ 11 בְּתֹכָחוֹת עַל־עָוֹן | יִסַּרְתָּ אִישׁ
וַתָּמֶס כָּעָשׁ חֲמוּדוֹ אַךְ הֶבֶל כָּל־אָדָם סֶלָה׃
12 שִׁמְעָה תְפִלָּתִי | יְהוָה וְשַׁוְעָתִי | הַאֲזִינָה אֶל־
דִּמְעָתִי אַל־תֶּחֱרַשׁ כִּי גֵר אָנֹכִי עִמָּךְ תּוֹשָׁב כְּכָל־
אֲבוֹתָי׃ 13 הָשַׁע מִמֶּנִּי וְאַבְלִיגָה בְּטֶרֶם אֵלֵךְ וְאֵינֶנִּי׃

Note on Ps. XXXIX.

child before God. "And now Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in Thee."

All the difficulties of life seem smoothed away by pure and absolute trust in our Almighty Father, and by the overwhelming consciousness that—poor weak creatures though we all are—yet His Infinite mercy is ever with us.

PSALM XLII.

To the Chief Musician. For the Sons of Korah.

As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. 2 My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? 3 My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God? 4 When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday. 5 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance.

6 O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember Thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar. 7 Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of Thy water-spouts; all Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me. 8 Yet the LORD will command His lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life. 9 I will say unto God my rock, Why hast Thou forgotten me? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? 10 As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God? 11 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why

XLII. מב

לַמְנַצֵּחַ מַשְׂכִּיל לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח׃

כְּאַיָּל תַּעֲרֹג עַל־אֲפִיקֵי־מָיִם כֵּן נַפְשִׁי תַעֲרֹג אֵלֶיךָ
אֱלֹהִים׃ 2 צָמְאָה נַפְשִׁי | לֵאלֹהִים לְאֵל חָי מָתַי אָבוֹא
וְאֵרָאֶה פְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים׃ 3 הָיְתָה־לִּי דִמְעָתִי לֶחֶם יוֹמָם
וָלָיְלָה בֶּאֱמֹר אֵלַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם אַיֵּה אֱלֹהָיִךְ׃ 4 אֵלֶּה אֶזְכְּרָה
| וְאֶשְׁפְּכָה עָלַי | נַפְשִׁי כִּי אֶעֱבֹר | בַּסָּךְ אֲדַדֵּם עַד־
בֵּית אֱלֹהִים בְּקוֹל־רִנָּה וְתוֹדָה הָמוֹן חוֹגֵג׃ 5 מַה־
תִּשְׁתּוֹחֲחִי | נַפְשִׁי וַתֶּהֱמִי עָלָי הוֹחִלִי לֵאלֹהִים כִּי־עוֹד
אוֹדֶנּוּ יְשׁוּעוֹת פָּנָיו׃ 6 אֱלֹהַי עָלַי נַפְשִׁי תִשְׁתּוֹחָח עַל־כֵּן
אֶזְכָּרְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ יַרְדֵּן וְחֶרְמוֹנִים מֵהַר מִצְעָר׃ 7 תְּהוֹם
אֶל־תְּהוֹם קוֹרֵא לְקוֹל צִנּוֹרֶיךָ כָּל־מִשְׁבָּרֶיךָ וְגַלֶּיךָ
עָלַי עָבָרוּ׃ 8 יוֹמָם | יְצַוֶּה יְהוָה | חַסְדּוֹ
וּבַלַּיְלָה שִׁירָה עִמִּי תְּפִלָּה לְאֵל חַיָּי׃ 9 אוֹמְרָה |
לְאֵל סַלְעִי לָמָּה שְׁכַחְתָּנִי לָמָּה־קֹדֵר אֵלֵךְ בְּלַחַץ
אוֹיֵב׃ 10 בְּרֶצַח | בְּעַצְמוֹתַי חֵרְפוּנִי צוֹרְרָי בְּאָמְרָם
אֵלַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם אַיֵּה אֱלֹהָיִךְ׃ 11 מַה תִּשְׁתּוֹחֲחִי | נַפְשִׁי

Ps. XLII. art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

PSALM XLIII.

JUDGE me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man. 2 For Thou art the God of my strength; why dost Thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? 3 O send out Thy light and Thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto Thy holy hill, and to Thy dwelling-place. 4 Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise Thee, O God my God. 5 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

Note on Ps. XLII. and Ps. XLIII.

The 42nd and 43rd Psalms form one poem, probably composed during the captivity, by an Israelite dwelling far from Jerusalem and from the Temple.

The first part describes the poet's yearning to feel that the spirit of God is with him, even in those strange surroundings. How long, he cries, ere I come to appear before God? He weeps day and night, and the strange people around him ask him, "Where is thy God?" He cannot find words to tell

וּמַה־תֶּהֱמִי עָלָי הוֹחִילִי לֵאלֹהִים כִּי־עוֹד אוֹדֶנּוּ Ps. XLII.
יְשׁוּעֹת פָּנַי וֵאלֹהָי׃

XLIII. מג

שָׁפְטֵנִי אֱלֹהִים | וְרִיבָה רִיבִי מִגּוֹי לֹא־חָסִיד מֵאִישׁ
מִרְמָה וְעַוְלָה תְפַלְּטֵנִי׃ 2 כִּי־אַתָּה | אֱלֹהֵי מָעֻזִּי
לָמָּה זְנַחְתָּנִי לָמָּה־קֹדֵר אֶתְהַלֵּךְ בְּלַחַץ אוֹיֵב׃
3 שְׁלַח־אוֹרְךָ וַאֲמִתְּךָ הֵמָּה יַנְחוּנִי יְבִיאוּנִי אֶל־הַר־
קָדְשְׁךָ וְאֶל־מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ׃ 4 וְאָבוֹאָה | אֶל־מִזְבַּח אֱלֹהִים
אֶל־אֵל שִׂמְחַת גִּילִי וְאוֹדְךָ בְכִנּוֹר אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהָי׃
5 מַה־תִּשְׁתּוֹחֲחִי | נַפְשִׁי וּמַה־תֶּהֱמִי עָלָי הוֹחִילִי
לֵאלֹהִים כִּי־עוֹד אוֹדֶנּוּ יְשׁוּעֹת פָּנַי וֵאלֹהָי׃

them; his heart is full to overflowing as he recalls the time when he was wont to go with a multitude of his brethren and fellow-worshippers to the Temple, all singing to God, with the voice of joy and praise. Then comes the beautiful refrain or chorus verse * repeated at the end of each of the three parts of the psalm—an invocation to the soul to take

Note on Ps. XLII. and Ps. XLIII.

* Verses 5 and 11 of Ps. xlii., and verse 5 of Ps xliii.

Note on Ps. XLII. and Ps. XLIII.

courage and to hope in God, Who will surely comfort all them that trust in Him.

The second part takes up the keynote of the refrain and enlarges on its dominant thought. It proclaims the poet's unalterable trust in God, whether in strange and distant lands or amid the roar and whirl of tempestuous waters. When evil comes on him he humbly turns to God, the Rock of his trust, to inquire of Him why He lets him suffer. And when he is tormented by the enemy, who as though thrusting a sword into his body, taunts him scoffingly with the oft-repeated question, "Where is thy God?" then again the heartening words of the refrain cheer him and lend him courage.

PSALM XLVI.

To the Chief Musician. A Song for the Sons of Korah.

GOD is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. 2 Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; 3 Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

4 There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. 5 God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early. 6 The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: He uttered His voice, the earth

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise Him, Who is the health of my countenance and my God" (that is, who is the source of all my strength, both of body and spirit). So ends part II.

Note on Ps. XLII. and Ps. XLIII.

Once again the poet raises his prayer to God; once more he inquires of God why must evil and suffering come upon him. And then, with increased faith, he utters the beautiful prayer,—"O send out Thy light and Thy truth; let them lead me; let them bring me unto Thy holy hill, and to Thine altars;" and the Psalm ends with the grand refrain, the full comfort and meaning of which has now reached the soul of the singer.

XLVI. מו

לַמְנַצֵּחַ לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח שִׁיר׃

אֱלֹהִים לָנוּ מַחֲסֶה וָעֹז עֶזְרָה בְצָרוֹת נִמְצָא מְאֹד׃
2 עַל־כֵּן לֹא־נִירָא בְּהָמִיר אֶרֶץ וּבְמוֹט הָרִים בְּלֵב יַמִּים׃
3 יֶהֱמוּ יֶחְמְרוּ מֵימָיו יִרְעֲשׁוּ־הָרִים בְּגַאֲתוֹ סֶלָה׃
4 נָהָר פְּלָגָיו יְשַׂמְּחוּ עִיר־אֱלֹהִים קְדֹשׁ מִשְׁכְּנֵי
עֶלְיוֹן׃ 5 אֱלֹהִים בְּקִרְבָּהּ בַּל־תִּמּוֹט יַעְזְרֶהָ אֱלֹהִים
לִפְנוֹת בֹּקֶר׃ 6 הָמוּ גוֹיִם מָטוּ מַמְלָכוֹת נָתַן בְּקוֹלוֹ
תָּמוּג אָרֶץ׃ 7 יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת עִמָּנוּ מִשְׂגָּב־לָנוּ אֱלֹהֵי

Ps. XLVI. melted. 7 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah. 8 Come, behold the works of the LORD, what wonders He hath made in the earth. 9 He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; He burneth the chariot in the fire. 10 Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. 11 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

Note on Ps. XLVI. When everything around us is going on just as usual, we are apt not to think very often about God. But suddenly something startling happens! Perhaps some great, unlooked-for joy or perhaps illness or danger or death comes very near to us. Then we think of God, and our hearts gather courage and comfort as we say the first words of this Psalm, "God is our refuge and our strength, a very present help in trouble."

This first verse expresses the main thought of the whole Psalm. The rest of the Psalm is divided into three parts, in each of which that same thought, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble," is brought to our minds by poetic imagery that helps us to realize the full meaning more and more vividly.

There is a refrain or chorus verse which, although it is only repeated after the second and third parts, is suggested to one's mind at the end of the first part too, and may very likely have only been accidentally left out when the Psalm was written down. (See Psalm xcviii.)

יַעֲקֹב סֶלָה׃ 8 לְכוּ חֲזוּ מִפְעֲלוֹת יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר־שָׂם
שַׁמּוֹת בָּאָרֶץ׃ 9 מַשְׁבִּית מִלְחָמוֹת עַד־קְצֵה הָאָרֶץ
קֶשֶׁת יְשַׁבֵּר וְקִצֵּץ חֲנִית עֲגָלוֹת יִשְׂרֹף בָּאֵשׁ׃
10 הַרְפּוּ וְדְעוּ כִּי־אָנֹכִי אֱלֹהִים אָרוּם בַּגּוֹיִם אָרוּם
בָּאָרֶץ׃ 11 יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת עִמָּנוּ מִשְׂגָּב לָנוּ אֱלֹהֵי
יַעֲקֹב סֶלָה׃

Note on Ps. XLVI

In the first part (verses 2 and 3) the Psalmist pictures floods and earthquakes, and says he will not fear these, for the very floods reflect the God-made laws of nature, by which, if we reverently study them, the wonders of God's works are revealed to us. (Remember this when you learn sciences such as geology, astronomy, chemistry, physics, &c., which record the laws of nature that men have learned by observation and experiment.)

In the next part (verses 4 to 6) the Psalmist presents by a different image that same thought—God is our ever present help in trouble. The streams of the flood, far from terrifying, rejoice the City of God, the holy abiding place of the Most High. In beautiful imagery he thus suggests the thought that the abiding place of the Most High is in the hearts of those who put their faith in God and that all these know that God will succour them at His appointed time, and in the manner His Infinite wisdom decrees, no matter what may be their danger.

Then comes the chorus verse (7), and then the

Note on Ps. XLVI.

third part (verses 8 to 10), the crown and climax of the whole, in which all thought of danger is gradually lost in the Psalmist's faith in the lovingkindness of God, the great Peace Maker. He seems to be hearing and uttering the very message of God in verse 10.

Then comes the final repetition of the chorus

PSALM XLVII. *

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm for the Sons of Korah.

O CLAP your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph. 2 For the LORD most high is terrible; He is a great King over all the earth. 3 He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet. 4 He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom He loved. Selah. 5 God is gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet. 6 Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises. 7 For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding. 8 God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of His holiness. 9 The princes of the people are gathered together, even the people of the God of Abraham: for the shields of the earth belong unto God: He is greatly exalted.

* This Psalm is sung before the sounding of the trumpet on New Year's Day.

verse with yet intenser meaning:—"The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." As we read it, the words of Isaiah seem to ring in our ears, and echo the Psalmist's faith; "Peace to him that is far off and to him that is near," said the Lord, "and I will heal him."

Note on Ps. XLVI.

XLVII. מז

לַמְנַצֵּחַ לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח מִזְמוֹר׃

כָּל־הָעַמִּים תִּקְעוּ־כָף הָרִיעוּ לֵאלֹהִים בְּקוֹל רִנָּה׃
2 כִּי־יְהוָה עֶלְיוֹן נוֹרָא מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל עַל־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ׃
3 יַדְבֵּר עַמִּים תַּחְתֵּינוּ וּלְאֻמִּים תַּחַת רַגְלֵינוּ׃
4 יִבְחַר־לָנוּ אֶת־נַחֲלָתֵנוּ אֶת גְּאוֹן יַעֲקֹב אֲשֶׁר אָהֵב
סֶלָה׃ 5 עָלָה אֱלֹהִים בִּתְרוּעָה יְהוָה בְּקוֹל שופָר׃
6 זַמְּרוּ אֱלֹהִים זַמֵּרוּ זַמְּרוּ לְמַלְכֵּנוּ זַמֵּרוּ׃ 7 כִּי־מֶלֶךְ
כָּל־הָאָרֶץ אֱלֹהִים זַמְּרוּ מַשְׂכִּיל׃ 8 מָלַךְ אֱלֹהִים עַל־
גּוֹיִם אֱלֹהִים יָשַׁב | עַל־כִּסֵּא קָדְשׁוֹ׃ 9 נְדִיבֵי עַמִּים |
נֶאֱסָפוּ עַם אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם כִּי לֵאלֹהִים מָגִנֵּי־אֶרֶץ
מְאֹד נַעֲלָה׃

Note on Ps. XLVII.

This song of thanks for victory in battle calls on the people of Israel to sing praises "with understanding" of the great truth that God is the King of all the earth; it breathes the same spirit as Ps. cxv. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for the sake of Thy mercy and Thy truth."

In order fully to understand this Psalm, you must just think for a moment of the time when it was written. Most of the peoples in the world were idolaters. They either worshipped the sun and moon and other wonders of creation, or they imagined a world of gods ruling this world of ours, and occasionally visiting it in the form of man, woman, or beast.

PSALM XLIX.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm for the Sons of Korah.

HEAR this, all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world: 2 Both low and high, rich and poor, together. 3 My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding. 4 I will incline mine ear to a parable: I will open my dark saying upon the harp. 5 Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when iniquity at my heels shall compass me about? 6 They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; 7 None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: 8 (For the redemption of

But to the Israelites the great truth of the One Almighty God was made known. The Psalmist realized the force of this great truth, of which the Israelites were at once the heralds and the guardians, and, in a prophetic spirit, he proclaims their mission—"He shall choose our inheritance for us." The Jews bore, and still bear to the world that great heritage, the message that God is the One Creator of all the world, the Author of all the Laws of Nature by which the whole world is governed—earth, sea, and heavens, living creatures, and growing plants,—and that every human being, however lowly and simple, needs no mediator to carry the prayer from his heart to God,—the Creator and Father of all.

Note on Ps. XLVII.

XLIX. מט

לַמְנַצֵּחַ לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח מִזְמוֹר׃

שִׁמְעוּ־זֹאת כָּל־הָעַמִּים הַאֲזִינוּ כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי חָלֶד׃
2 גַּם־בְּנֵי אָדָם גַּם־בְּנֵי־אִישׁ יַחַד עָשִׁיר וְאֶבְיוֹן׃
3 פִּי יְדַבֵּר חָכְמוֹת וְהָגוּת לִבִּי תְבוּנוֹת׃ 4 אַטֶּה
לְמָשָׁל אָזְנִי אֶפְתַּח בְּכִנּוֹר חִידָתִי׃ 5 לָמָּה אִירָא בִּימֵי
רָע עֲוֹן עֲקֵבַי יְסֹבְבֵנִי׃ 6 הַבֹּטְחִים עַל־חֵילָם וּבְרֹב עָשְׁרָם
יִתְהַלָּלוּ׃ 7 אָח לֹא־פָדֹה יִפְדֶּה אִישׁ לֹא־יִתֵּן לֵאלֹהִים

Ps. XLIX. their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:)
9 That he should still live for ever, and not see
corruption. 10 For he seeth that wise men die,
likewise the fool and the brutish perish, and leave
their wealth to others. 11 Their inward thought is,
that their houses shall continue for ever, and their
dwelling places to all generations; they call their
lands after their own names. 12 Nevertheless man
being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts
that perish.

13 This their way is their folly: yet their posterity
approve their sayings. Selah. 14 Like sheep they
are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them;
and the upright shall have dominion over them in
the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the
grave from their dwelling. 15 But God will redeem
my soul from the power of the grave: for He shall
receive me. Selah. 16 Be not thou afraid when
one is made rich, when the glory of his house is
increased; 17 For when he dieth he shall carry
nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him.
18 Though while he lived he counted himself an
happy man: and men will praise thee, when thou
doest well to thyself. 19 He shall go to the
generation of his fathers; they shall never see light.
20 Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is
like the beasts that perish.

Note on Ps. XLIX. After the poetic invocation of the first four verses the Psalmist dilates on the different measure of happiness and suffering that befalls different people.

Ps. XLIX.

בָּפְרוֹ׃ 8 וְיֵקַר פִּדְיוֹן נַפְשָׁם וְחָדַל לְעוֹלָם׃ 9 וְיִחִי־
עוֹד לָנֶצַח לֹא יִרְאֶה הַשָּׁחַת׃ 10 כִּי יִרְאֶה | חֲכָמִים
יָמוּתוּ יַחַד כְּסִיל וָבַעַר יאבֵדוּ וְעָזְבוּ לַאֲחֵרִים חֵילָם׃
11 קִרְבָּם בָּתֵּימוֹ | לְעוֹלָם מִשְׁכְּנֹתָם לְדֹר וָדֹר קָרְאוּ
בִשְׁמוֹתָם עֲלֵי אֲדָמוֹת׃ 12 וְאָדָם בִּיקָר בַּל־יָלִין נִמְשַׁל
כַּבְּהֵמוֹת נִדְמוּ׃ 13 זֶה דַרְכָּם כֶּסֶל לָמוֹ וְאַחֲרֵיהֶם |
בְּפִיהֶם יִרְצוּ סֶלָה׃ 14 כַּצֹּאן | לִשְׁאוֹל שַׁתּוּ מָוֶת יִרְעֵם
וַיִּרְדּוּ בָם יְשָׁרִים | לַבֹּקֶר וְצִירָם לְבַלּוֹת שְׁאוֹל
מִזְּבֻל לוֹ׃ 15 אַךְ־אֱלֹהִים יִפְדֶּה־נַפְשִׁי מִיַּד שְׁאוֹל
כִּי יִקָּחֵנִי סֶלָה׃ 16 אַל־תִּירָא כִּי־יַעֲשִׁיר אִישׁ כִּי־
יִרְבֶּה כְּבוֹד בֵּיתוֹ׃ 17 כִּי לֹא בְמוֹתוֹ יִקַּח הַכֹּל
לֹא־יֵרֵד אַחֲרָיו כְּבוֹדוֹ׃ 18 כִּי־נַפְשׁוֹ בְּחַיָּיו יְבָרֵךְ
וְיוֹדְךָ כִּי־תֵיטִיב לָךְ׃ 19 תָּבֹא עַד־דּוֹר אֲבוֹתָיו עַד־
נֶצַח לֹא יִרְאוּ־אוֹר׃ 20 אָדָם בִּיקָר וְלֹא יָבִין נִמְשַׁל
כַּבְּהֵמוֹת נִדְמוּ׃

Note on Ps. XLIX.

He contrasts those who remember and those who forget, that life in this world is only a preparation for life in the world to come.

Note on Ps. XLIX.

Those who forget this, devote their lives to wholly selfish aims. If they are rich they become so absorbed in the pride of great possessions that they even forget that they can neither avert death from others (verse 7) nor escape it themselves (verses 7 to 10).

Those who remember accept their lot in life bravely. However hard it may be, they are comforted by the thought, "God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, for He shall receive me" (verse 15).

The contrast is summed up in verses 12 and 20.

(Verse 12.) "Man in honour" (i.e. with rank and power) "abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish."

(Verse 20.) "Man in honour *that understandeth not*, is like the beasts that perish."

In these graphic words the Psalmist points out

PSALM L.

A Psalm of Asaph.

THE mighty God, even the LORD, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. 2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. 3 Our God shall come and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. 4 He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people. 5 Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by

that it is not mere power or possessions that differentiates mankind from "the beasts that perish," but it is the use we make of the God-given power of knowledge and understanding. Note on Ps. XLIX.

This Psalm calls to mind Scott's expression of a similar thought.

"High though his title, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim,
Despite those titles, power and pelf,
The wretch concentred all on self.
Living shall forfeit fair renown,
And doubly dying shall go down
To the vile earth from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonoured and unsung."

The sonorous overture and vivid word-pictures of this Psalm compared with the terse English verses are a good illustration of the characteristic difference between Eastern and Western minstrelsy.

L. נ

מִזְמוֹר לְאָסָף׃

אֵל ׀ אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה דִּבֶּר וַיִּקְרָא־אֶרֶץ מִמִּזְרַח־שֶׁמֶשׁ
עַד־מְבוֹאוֹ׃ 2 מִצִּיּוֹן מִכְלַל־יֹפִי אֱלֹהִים הוֹפִיעַ׃ 3 יָבֹא
אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַל־יֶחֱרַשׁ אֵשׁ־לְפָנָיו תֹּאכֵל וּסְבִיבָיו נִשְׁעָרָה
מְאֹד׃ 4 יִקְרָא אֶל־הַשָּׁמַיִם מֵעָל וְאֶל־הָאָרֶץ לָדִין
עַמּוֹ׃ 5 אִסְפוּ־לִי חֲסִידָי כֹּרְתֵי בְרִיתִי עֲלֵי־זָבַח׃
6 וַיַּגִּידוּ שָׁמַיִם צִדְקוֹ כִּי־אֱלֹהִים ׀ שֹׁפֵט הוּא סֶלָה׃

Ps. L. sacrifice. 6 And the heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is judge Himself. Selah.

7 "Hear, O My people, and I will speak; O Israel, and I will testify against thee; I am God, even thy God. 8 I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings, to have been continually before Me. 9 I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goats out of thy folds. 10 For every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. 11 I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are Mine. 12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is Mine, and the fulness thereof. 13 Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? 14 Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High: 15 And call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me." 16 But unto the wicked God saith, "What hast thou to do to declare My statutes, or that thou shouldest take My covenant in thy mouth? 17 Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest My words behind thee. 18 When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers. 19 Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. 20 Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son. 21 These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. 22

Ps. L.

7 שִׁמְעָה עַמִּי ׀ וַאֲדַבֵּרָה יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָעִידָה בָּךְ אֱלֹהִים
אֱלֹהֶיךָ אָנֹכִי׃ 8 לֹא עַל־זִבְחֶיךָ אוֹכִיחֶךָ וְעוֹלוֹתֶיךָ
לְנֶגְדִּי תָמִיד׃ 9 לֹא־אֶקַּח מִבֵּיתְךָ פָּר מִמִּכְלְאוֹתֶיךָ
עַתּוּדִים׃ 10 כִּי־לִי כָל־חַיְתוֹ־יָעַר בְּהֵמוֹת בְּהָרֵי־אָלֶף׃
11 יָדַעְתִּי כָּל־עוֹף הָרִים וְזִיז שָׂדַי עִמָּדִי׃ 12 אִם־
אֶרְעַב לֹא־אֹמַר לָךְ כִּי־לִי תֵּבֵל וּמְלֹאָהּ׃ 13 הַאוֹכַל
בְּשַׂר אַבִּירִים וְדַם עַתּוּדִים אֶשְׁתֶּה׃ 14 זְבַח לֵאלֹהִים
תּוֹדָה וְשַׁלֵּם לְעֶלְיוֹן נְדָרֶיךָ׃ 15 וְקָרְאֵנִי בְּיוֹם צָרָה
אֲחַלֶּצְךָ וּתְכַבְּדָנִי׃ 16 וְלָרָשָׁע ׀ אָמַר אֱלֹהִים מַה־לְּךָ
לְסַפֵּר חֻקָּי וַתִּשָּׂא בְרִיתִי עָלֵי־פִיךָ׃ 17 וְאַתָּה שָׂנֵאתָ
מוּסָר וַתַּשְׁלֵךְ דְּבָרַי אָחֳרֶיךָ׃ 18 אִם־רָאִיתָ גַּנָּב
וַתִּרֶץ עִמּוֹ וְעִם מְנָאֲפִים חֶלְקֶךָ׃ 19 פִּיךָ שָׁלַחְתָּ בְרָעָה
וּלְשׁוֹנְךָ תַּצְמִיד מִרְמָה׃ 20 תֵּשֵׁב בְּאָחִיךָ תְדַבֵּר
בְּבֶן־אִמְּךָ תִּתֵּן־דֹּפִי׃ 21 אֵלֶּה עָשִׂיתָ ׀ וְהֶחֱרַשְׁתִּי
דִּמְיָתָ הֱיוֹת־אֶהְיֶה כָמוֹךָ אוֹכִיחֲךָ וְאֶעֶרְכָה לְעֵינֶיךָ׃
22 בִּינוּ־נָא זֹאת שֹׁכְחֵי אֱלוֹהַּ פֶּן־אֶטְרֹף וְאֵין מַצִּיל׃

Ps. L. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. 23 Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me: and to him that ordereth his way aright will I shew the salvation of God."

Note on Ps. L. This Psalm is a poem on the meaning and use of prayer. The first six verses describing the grandeur of God, the great and perfectly just Judge of all the earth, leads up to the main thought,—how can we make our prayers acceptable to God?

The poet seems to hear God himself uttering the answer. Neither burnt-offering nor sacrifices of beasts (verses 9 to 15), nor reciting the Divine statutes, nor declaring the holy covenant (verse 16) are the essentials of the worship of God; but a constant effort to live and act with the thought of

PSALM LI.

A Penitential Prayer.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David when Nathan the Prophet rebuked him about Bathsheba.

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my trangressions. 2 Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I acknowledge my trangressions: and my sin is ever before me. 4 Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight: that Thou mightest be

זֹבֵחַ תּוֹדָה יְכַבְּדָנְנִי וְשָׂם דֶּרֶךְ אַרְאֶנּוּ בִּישׁוּעַת 23 Ps. L.
אֱלֹהִים׃

the goodness of God in our minds, a constant effort to be good and to do good, to shun evil companions, and to refrain from evil deeds, and to exercise self-control against the evil impulses of anger, hatred, and revenge, and to avoid being led away to do what we know to be wrong;—that is the way in which we must (in the words of the Psalmist) "pay our vows to the most High"—We must make our offering of "praise" by humbly striving at all times to "order our way" of life (our thoughts and our acts) in the image of Divine goodness. Note on Ps. L.

LI. נא

לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד׃

בְּבוֹא־אֵלָיו נָתָן הַנָּבִיא כַּאֲשֶׁר־בָּא אֶל־בַּת־שָׁבַע׃

חָנֵּנִי אֱלֹהִים כְּחַסְדֶּךָ כְּרֹב רַחֲמֶיךָ מְחֵה פְשָׁעָי׃
2 הֶרֶבֵּה כַּבְּסֵנִי מֵעֲוֹנִי וּמֵחַטָּאתִי טַהֲרֵנִי׃ 3 כִּי־פְשָׁעַי
אֲנִי אֵדָע וְחַטָּאתִי נֶגְדִּי תָמִיד׃ 4 לְךָ לְבַדְּךָ | חָטָאתִי

Ps. LI. justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest. 5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. 6 Behold, Thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part Thou shalt make me to know wisdom. 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which Thou hast broken may rejoice. 9 Hide Thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. 11 Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy holy spirit from me. 12 Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me with Thy free spirit. 13 Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto Thee. 14 Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of Thy righteousness. 15 O Lord, open Thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth Thy praise. 16 For Thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: Thou delightest not in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise. 18 Do good in Thy good pleasure unto Zion: build Thou the walls of Jerusalem. 19 Then shalt Thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar.

Ps. LI.

וְתָרַע בְּעֵינֶיךָ עָשִׂיתִי לְמַעַן תִּצְדַּק בְּדָבְרֶךָ תִּזְכֶּה
בְשָׁפְטֶךָ׃ 5 הֵן־בְּעָוֹן חוֹלָלְתִּי וּבְחֵטְא יֶחֱמַתְנִי
אִמִּי׃ 6 הֵן־אֱמֶת חָפַצְתָּ בַטֻּחוֹת וּבְסָתֻם חָכְמָה
תוֹדִיעֵנִי׃ 7 תְּחַטְּאֵנִי בְאֵזוֹב וְאֶטְהָר תְּכַבְּסֵנִי וּמִשֶּׁלֶג
אַלְבִּין׃ 8 תַּשְׁמִיעֵנִי שָׂשׂוֹן וְשִׂמְחָה תָּגֵלְנָה עֲצָמוֹת
דִּכִּיתָ׃ 9 הַסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מֵחֲטָאָי וְכָל־עֲוֹנֹתַי מְחֵה׃
10 לֵב טָהוֹר בְּרָא־לִי אֱלֹהִים וְרוּחַ נָכוֹן חַדֵּשׁ בְּקִרְבִּי׃
11 אַל־תַּשְׁלִיכֵנִי מִלְּפָנֶיךָ וְרוּחַ קָדְשְׁךָ אַל־תִּקַּח מִמֶּנִּי׃
12 הָשִׁיבָה לִּי שְׂשׂוֹן יִשְׁעֶךָ וְרוּחַ נְדִיבָה תִסְמְכֵנִי׃
13 אֲלַמְּדָה פֹשְׁעִים דְּרָכֶיךָ וְחַטָּאִים אֵלֶיךָ יָשׁוּבוּ׃
14 הַצִּילֵנִי מִדָּמִים | אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵי תְשׁוּעָתִי תְּרַנֵּן
לְשׁוֹנִי צִדְקָתֶךָ׃ 15 אֲדֹנָי שְׂפָתַי תִּפְתָּח וּפִי יַגִּיד
תְּהִלָּתֶךָ׃ 16 כִּי | לֹא־תַחְפֹּץ זֶבַח וְאֶתְּנָה עוֹלָה לֹא
תִרְצֶה׃ 17 זִבְחֵי אֱלֹהִים רוּחַ נִשְׁבָּרָה לֵב־נִשְׁבָּר
וְנִדְכֶּה אֱלֹהִים לֹא תִבְזֶה׃ 18 הֵיטִיבָה בִרְצוֹנְךָ אֶת־
צִיּוֹן תִּבְנֶה חוֹמוֹת יְרוּשָׁלָם׃ 19 אָז תַּחְפֹּץ זִבְחֵי־צֶדֶק
עוֹלָה וְכָלִיל אָז יַעֲלוּ עַל־מִזְבַּחֲךָ פָּרִים׃

Note on Ps. LI. The 51st Psalm, like the 130th, shows the comfort and help of prayer to us, when we know we have sinned.

The beautiful prayer of verses 1 and 2 brings courage to our hearts to make, like David, a whole-hearted acknowledgment of our wrong-doing to God, to throw ourselves on His mercy, and, whatever happens, to feel submissive to His will (verse 4). God has given us the knowledge of right and wrong; when we do what we know to be wrong, we are dishonouring God's gift to us. David perceives this, and recognizes the justice of God's displeasure, and of any punishment that may befall sinners.

When we know we have done wrong, it is hard to gather courage to try to win back our own self-respect. We feel as if a barrier were between God and ourselves till we learn the meaning and the help of David's prayer (verse 11): "Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy holy spirit from me."

If we try—at every moment of our lives—to remember that His holy spirit *is* within us, and try to live in His presence, the lofty ideal of Divine goodness shines like a beacon before us, ever showing

PSALM LVI.

To the Chief Musician. A poem of David when the Philistines took him in Gath.

BE merciful unto me, O God: for man would swallow me up; all the day long he fighting oppresseth me. 2 Mine enemies would swallow me up all the day long: for they be many that fight against me, O Thou most High. 3 What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee.

us the right path, and ever beckoning us to return to it when we have gone astray. Then we feel that God in His Infinite mercy gives us the hope of His forgiveness and of His help to strengthen us against temptation, if only we humbly acknowledge our wrong-doing, and feel truly sorrow for it. "The sacrifices of the Lord are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise."

Note on Ps. LI.

The last two verses of the Psalm reflect King David's ardent wish that the Israelites should be worthy of their great mission. He prayed for them that they might seek to mirror the goodness of God in their own souls, and avoid the error of thinking that the observance of the ordinances of sacrifices and burnt-offerings was an all-sufficient manner of worshipping God. The poetic form of the prayer makes it all the more beautiful. "Build Thou the walls of Jerusalem" (i.e. the bulwarks of faith and uprightness in those who dwell there). "Then wilt Thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness." The burnt-offerings and offerings of bullocks could only be pleasing to God if they were truly symbolical of that higher offering of the sacrifices of righteousness.

LVI. נו

לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְדָוִד מִכְתָּם

בְּאֶחֹז אוֹתוֹ פְּלִשְׁתִּים בְּגַת׃

חָנֵּנִי אֱלֹהִים כִּי־שְׁאָפַנִי אֱנוֹשׁ כָּל־הַיּוֹם לוֹחֵם יְלָחֲצֵנִי׃

2 שָׁאֲפוּ שֹׁרְרַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם כִּי־רַבִּים לֹחֲמִים לִי מָרוֹם׃

Ps. LVI. 4 In God I will praise His word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.
5 All the day long they wrest my words: all their thoughts are against me for evil. 6 They gather themselves together, they hide themselves, they mark my steps, when they wait for my soul. 7 Shall they escape by iniquity? in Thine anger cast down the people, O God. 8 Thou tellest my wanderings: put Thou my tears into Thy bottle: are they not in Thy book? 9 When I cry unto Thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me.
10 In God will I praise His word; in the LORD will I praise His word. 11 In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid; what can man do unto me? 12 Thy vows are upon me, O God: I will render praises unto Thee. 13 For Thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not Thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?

PSALM LVII.

To the Chief Musician. A Poem of David, when he fled from Saul in the Cave.

BE merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in Thee: yea, in the shadow of Thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast. 2 I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for

Ps. LVI.

יוֹם אִירָא אֲנִי אֵלֶיךָ אֶבְטָח׃ 4 בֵּאלֹהִים אֲהַלֵּל
דְּבָרוֹ בֵּאלֹהִים בָּטַחְתִּי לֹא אִירָא מַה־יַּעֲשֶׂה בָשָׂר לִי׃
5 כָּל־הַיּוֹם דְּבָרַי יְעַצֵּבוּ עָלַי כָּל־מַחְשְׁבֹתָם לָרָע׃
6 יָגוּרוּ | וְיִצְפֹּנוּ הֵמָּה עֲקֵבַי יִשְׁמֹרוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר קִוּוּ נַפְשִׁי׃
7 עַל־אָוֶן פַּלֵּט־לָמוֹ בְּאַף עַמִּים | הוֹרֵד אֱלֹהִים׃
8 נָדִי סָפַרְתָּה אָתָּה שִׂימָה דִמְעָתִי בְנֹאדֶךָ הֲלֹא
בְּסִפְרָתֶךָ׃ 9 אָז | יָשׁוּבוּ אוֹיְבַי אָחוֹר בְּיוֹם אֶקְרָא
זֶה־יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־אֱלֹהִים לִי׃ 10 בֵּאלֹהִים אֲהַלֵּל דָּבָר
בַּיהוָה אֲהַלֵּל דָּבָר׃ 11 בֵּאלֹהִים בָּטַחְתִּי לֹא אִירָא
מַה־יַּעֲשֶׂה אָדָם לִי׃ 12 עָלַי אֱלֹהִים נְדָרֶיךָ אֲשַׁלֵּם
תּוֹדוֹת לָךְ׃ 13 כִּי הִצַּלְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִמָּוֶת הֲלֹא רַגְלַי
מִדֶּחִי לְהִתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים בְּאוֹר הַחַיִּים׃

LVII. נז

לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְדָוִד מִכְתָּם
בְּבָרְחוֹ מִפְּנֵי־שָׁאוּל בַּמְּעָרָה׃

חָנֵּנִי אֱלֹהִים | חָנֵּנִי כִּי בְךָ חָסָיָה נַפְשִׁי וּבְצֵל־
כְּנָפֶיךָ אֶחֱסֶה עַד יַעֲבֹר הַוּוֹת׃ 2 אֶקְרָא לֵאלֹהִים

Ps. LVII. me. 3 He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth His mercy and His truth.

4 My soul is among lions: and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword. 5 Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let Thy glory be above all the earth.

6 They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen themselves. Selah. 7 My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise. 8 Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early. 9 I will praise Thee, O LORD, among the people: I will sing unto Thee among the nations. 10 For Thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and Thy truth unto the clouds. 11 Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let Thy glory be above all the earth.

Note on Ps. LVI. and Ps. LVII. These two Psalms, both beginning with the same prayer, form one poem, the outpouring of David's heart to God when he was in great trouble, struggling against the unfounded jealousy and unjust enmity of King Saul. In this dark time of trial and danger, David's unfailing trust in God arms him with courage, and inspires him with a lofty standard of conduct, reflected in the refrain of the first part of the poem (verses 4, 10, and 11, Ps. lvi.). Verse 12 shows

Ps. LVII.

עֶלְיוֹן לָאֵל גֹּמֵר עָלָי׃ 3 יִשְׁלַח מִשָּׁמַיִם | וְיוֹשִׁיעֵנִי
חֵרֵף שֹׁאֲפִי סֶלָה יִשְׁלַח אֱלֹהִים חַסְדּוֹ וַאֲמִתּוֹ׃
4 נַפְשִׁי | בְּתוֹךְ לְבָאִם אֶשְׁכְּבָה לֹהֲטִים בְּנֵי־אָדָם
שִׁנֵּיהֶם חֲנִית וְחִצִּים וּלְשׁוֹנָם חֶרֶב חַדָּה׃ 5 רוּמָה
עַל־הַשָּׁמַיִם אֱלֹהִים עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדֶךָ׃ 6 רֶשֶׁת |
הֵכִינוּ | לִפְעָמַי כָּפַף נַפְשִׁי כָּרוּ לְפָנַי שִׁיחָה נָפְלוּ
בְתוֹכָהּ סֶלָה׃ 7 נָכוֹן לִבִּי אֱלֹהִים נָכוֹן לִבִּי אָשִׁירָה
וַאֲזַמֵּרָה׃ 8 עוּרָה כְבוֹדִי עוּרָה הַנֵּבֶל וְכִנּוֹר אָעִירָה
שָׁחַר׃ 9 אוֹדְךָ בָעַמִּים | אֲדֹנָי אֲזַמֶּרְךָ בַּלְאֻמִּים׃
10 כִּי־גָדַל עַד־שָׁמַיִם חַסְדֶּךָ וְעַד־שְׁחָקִים אֲמִתֶּךָ׃
11 רוּמָה עַל־שָׁמַיִם אֱלֹהִים עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדֶךָ׃

Note on Ps. LVI. and Ps. LVII.

David's sense of his own responsibility to God for his conduct—a sense which harmonizes with complete faith in God. For if we try always to do what is right and kind, we feel, with perfect faith, that whatever may befall us, God in His Infinite mercy will not be unmindful of our efforts to obey His law at all times. David prays not for mere bodily safety, but for a serene mind and a clear conscience. "For Thou hast delivered my soul from death; wilt

Note on Ps. LVI. and Ps. LVII.

not Thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?"

The allusion to tear bottles and to the book (or record) of God (Ps. lvi. 8) is a quaint piece of imagery, conveying the thought that the measure of our sorrows and sufferings is balanced against our sins and shortcomings in the judgment of God. Imagery is sometimes apt to be taken literally, and there is reason to believe that a custom actually grew up of storing tears in a bottle,[1] as tangible evidence of suffering, to serve as a plea for Divine grace.

[1] The "bottles" of those days were skins of the bodies of animals tied into a convenient shape. In Eastern countries one still sees men carrying water in goatskins, and pouring it out by the improvised tap of one leg.

PSALM LX.

To the Chief Musician. A Poem of David when he strove with Aram-Naharaim and with Aram-Zobah, when Joab returned and smote of Edom in the Valley of Salt twelve thousand.*

O GOD, Thou hast cast us off, Thou hast scattered us, Thou hast been displeased; O turn Thyself to us again. 2 Thou hast made the earth to tremble; Thou hast broken it: heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh. 3 Thou hast shewed Thy people hard things: Thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment. 4 Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee, to lift up before the bow. Selah.

* These victories are recorded in the Second Book of Samuel, ch. 8, and the First Book of Chronicles, ch. 18.

In the second part of the poem (Ps. ivii.), David reiterates his loving trustfulness in God. "In the shadow of Thy wings will I make my refuge, till these calamities be overpast."

Note on Ps. LVI. and Ps. LVII.

While David was in this exalted frame of mind, two terrible temptations came to him. Twice he lighted upon his unrelenting enemy, King Saul, asleep and defenceless. Each time, with chivalrous loyalty, David let him go without so much as touching a hair of his head, saying:—"He (God) shall send from heaven and save me from the reproach of him (Saul) that would swallow me up."

The temptations that assailed him are the theme of verses 4 and 6 of Ps. lvii. The fervent prayers of verses 2 and 5 gave him strength to resist them. The last five verses are a song of thanksgiving for God's help in the moral victory.

LX ס

לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִכְתָּם לְדָוִד לְלַמֵּד׃

בְּהַצּוֹתוֹ | אֶת אֲרַם נַהֲרַיִם וְאֶת־אֲרַם צוֹבָה וַיָּשָׁב
יוֹאָב וַיַּךְ אֶת־אֱדוֹם בְּגֵיא־מֶלַח שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר אָלֶף׃
אֱלֹהִים זְנַחְתָּנוּ פְרַצְתָּנוּ אָנַפְתָּ תְּשׁוֹבֵב לָנוּ׃
2 הִרְעַשְׁתָּה אֶרֶץ פִּצַּמְתָּהּ רְפָה שְׁבָרֶיהָ כִּי־מָטָה׃
3 הֶרְאֵיתָ עַמְּךָ קָשֶׁה הִשְׁקִיתָנוּ יַיִן תַּרְעֵלָה׃ 4 נָתַתָּה
לִירֵאֶיךָ נֵס לְהִתְנוֹסֵס מִפְּנֵי קֶשֶׁט סֶלָה׃ 5 לְמַעַן

Ps. LX. 5 That Thy beloved may be delivered; let Thy right hand save, and answer me. 6 God hath spoken in His holiness. I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth. 7 Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver; 8 Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe: Over Philistia shall be my triumph.

9 Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom? 10 Wilt not Thou, O God, which hadst cast us off? and wilt not Thou, O God, go forth with our hosts? 11 Give us help from trouble; for vain is the help of man. 12 Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.

PSALM CVIII.

A Song or Psalm of David.

O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory. 2 Awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early. 3 I will praise Thee, O Lord, among the people: and I will sing praises unto Thee among the nations. 4 For Thy mercy is great above the heavens: and Thy truth reacheth unto the clouds. 5 Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: and Thy glory above all the earth;

6 That Thy beloved may be delivered: save with

Ps. LX.

יֵחָלְצוּן יְדִידֶיךָ הוֹשִׁיעָה יְמִינְךָ וַעֲנֵנִי׃ 6 אֱלֹהִים ו
דִּבֶּר בְּקָדְשׁוֹ אֶעֱלֹזָה אֲחַלְקָה שְׁכֶם וְעֵמֶק סֻכּוֹת
אֲמַדֵּד׃ 7 לִי גִלְעָד ו וְלִי מְנַשֶּׁה וְאֶפְרַיִם מָעוֹז רֹאשִׁי
יְהוּדָה מְחֹקְקִי׃ 8 מוֹאָב ו סִיר רַחְצִי עַל־אֱדוֹם
אַשְׁלִיךְ נַעֲלִי עָלַי פְּלֶשֶׁת הִתְרוֹעָעִי׃ 9 מִי יוֹבִלֵנִי
עִיר מָצוֹר מִי נָחָנִי עַד־אֱדוֹם׃ 10 הֲלֹא־אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים
זְנַחְתָּנוּ וְלֹא־תֵצֵא אֱלֹהִים בְּצִבְאוֹתֵינוּ׃ 11 הָבָה־לָּנוּ
עֶזְרַת מִצָּר וְשָׁוְא תְּשׁוּעַת אָדָם׃ 12 בֵּאלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה־
חָיִל וְהוּא יָבוּס צָרֵינוּ׃

CVIII. קח

שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד׃

נָכוֹן לִבִּי אֱלֹהִים אָשִׁירָה וַאֲזַמְּרָה אַף־כְּבוֹדִי׃
2 עוּרָה הַנֵּבֶל וְכִנּוֹר אָעִירָה שָׁחַר 3 אוֹדְךָ בָעַמִּים
יְהוָה וַאֲזַמֶּרְךָ בַּלְאֻמִּים׃ 4 כִּי־גָדוֹל מֵעַל־שָׁמַיִם
חַסְדֶּךָ וְעַד־שְׁחָקִים אֲמִתֶּךָ׃ 5 רוּמָה עַל־שָׁמַיִם אֱלֹהִים
וְעַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדֶךָ׃ 6 לְמַעַן יֵחָלְצוּן יְדִידֶיךָ הוֹשִׁיעָה

Ps. CVIII. Thy right hand, and answer me. 7 God hath spoken in His holiness. I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth. 8 Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver; 9 Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe; over Philistia will I triumph. 10 Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom? 11 Wilt not Thou, O God, which hadst cast us off? And wilt not Thou, O God, go forth with our hosts? 12 Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man. 13 Through God we shall do valiantly: for He it is that shall tread down our enemies.

Note on Ps. LX. and Ps. CVIII. These two psalms are placed together because the last eight verses of the 60th Psalm and of the 108th Psalm are the same; but the opening verses are strikingly different.

Both Psalms commemorate King David's victorious campaigns against the Philistines, the Edomites and the Moabites on the south, and against the Syrians on the north—campaigns which enlarged and secured the boundaries of his kingdom.

In the 60th Psalm David begins by recalling the struggles and disasters of the Israelites whenever they ignored the laws of God. In the third verse he deplores that the Israelites, too easily self-satisfied, had to suffer hard trials and to "drink the wine of astonishment" in order that they might realize the strenuous efforts necessary to attain to goodness.

Then follows the noble thought,—clad in the

Ps. CVIII.

יְמִינְךָ וַעֲנֵנִי׃ 7 אֱלֹהִים | דִּבֶּר בְּקָדְשׁוֹ אֶעֱלֹזָה אֲחַלְקָה
שְׁכֶם וְעֵמֶק סֻכּוֹת אֲמַדֵּד׃ 8 לִי גִלְעָד | לִי מְנַשֶּׁה
וְאֶפְרַיִם מָעוֹז רֹאשִׁי יְהוּדָה מְחֹקְקִי׃ 9 מוֹאָב | סִיר
רַחְצִי עַל־אֱדוֹם אַשְׁלִיךְ נַעֲלִי עָלַי פְּלֶשֶׁת אֶתְרוֹעָע׃
10 מִי יוֹבִלֵנִי עִיר מִבְצָר מִי נָחָנִי עַד־אֱדוֹם׃
11 הֲלֹא־אֱלֹהִים זְנַחְתָּנוּ וְלֹא־תֵצֵא אֱלֹהִים בְּצִבְאוֹתֵינוּ׃
12 הָבָה־לָּנוּ עֶזְרַת מִצָּר וְשָׁוְא תְּשׁוּעַת אָדָם׃
13 בֵּאלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה־חָיִל וְהוּא יָבוּס צָרֵינוּ׃

Note on Ps. LX. and Ps. CVIII.

imagery of the banner that is the rallying point before the bow of the enemy,—that the lofty ideal of goodness is constantly present to the minds of those who revere God, and that it gives them *moral* safety. The prayer of verse 5 is inspired by the thought of verse 4: "So that Thy beloved" (i.e. those who revere Thee) "may be delivered, save with Thy right hand, and answer me." And then comes the song of thanks and recognition of the help of God in the hour of victory.

The opening verses of Psalm cviii. are a fervent and joyful expression of thanks and praise to God, and a proclamation to all peoples of His mercy and His truth. The triumphant pæan of praise and thanks to God for Divine help, and recognition of the Almighty power of God and the impotence of mankind, form the theme of both these Psalms.

PSALM LXI.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

HEAR my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. 2 From the end of the earth will I cry unto Thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. 3 For Thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy. 4 I will abide in Thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of Thy wings. Selah.

5 For Thou, O God, hast heard my vows: Thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear Thy name. 6 Thou wilt prolong the king's life: and his years as many generations. 7 He shall abide before God for ever: O prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him. 8 So will I sing praise unto Thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.

Note on Ps. LXI. Psalm lxi. shows David both as a hero and as a king. The first five verses are the key-note of the dauntless spirit and steadfast courage of heroes in all ages. Intense faith in God, and serene trustfulness in His mercy, gave David "the heritage of those that fear Thy name," the calm and splendid courage that sustained him in all the vicissitudes of his adventurous life.

From shepherd to warrior, from warrior to outlaw, from outlaw to monarch, David tells us all his thoughts and feelings, and through them all, his firm faith in God shines out. When danger comes very near him, when trouble overwhelms his heart,

LXI. סא

לַמְנַצֵּחַ | לְדָוִד׃

שִׁמְעָה אֱלֹהִים רִנָּתִי הַקְשִׁיבָה תְּפִלָּתִי׃ 2 מִקְצֵה
הָאָרֶץ | אֵלֶיךָ אֶקְרָא בַּעֲטֹף לִבִּי בְּצוּר־יָרוּם מִמֶּנִּי
תַנְחֵנִי׃ 3 כִּי־הָיִיתָ מַחְסֶה לִי מִגְדַּל־עֹז מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב׃
4 אָגוּרָה בְאָהֳלְךָ עוֹלָמִים אֶחֱסֶה בְסֵתֶר כְּנָפֶיךָ סֶלָה׃
5 כִּי־אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים שָׁמַעְתָּ לִנְדָרָי נָתַתָּ יְרֻשַׁת יִרְאֵי
שְׁמֶךָ׃ 6 יָמִים עַל־יְמֵי־מֶלֶךְ תּוֹסִיף שְׁנוֹתָיו כְּמוֹ־דֹר
וָדֹר׃ 7 יֵשֵׁב עוֹלָם לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת מַן
יְנַצְּרֵהוּ׃ 8 כֵּן | אֲזַמְּרָה שִׁמְךָ לָעַד לְשַׁלְּמִי נְדָרַי
יוֹם | יוֹם

or when the burden of responsibility of a ruler weighs heavily on him, he prays to God to strengthen his heart. "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I," is his prayer; and a noble utterance it is, expressing humble consciousness of the weakness of man, and steadfast faith in the greatness and goodness of God. Note on Ps. LXI.

The last three verses show David's sense of the tremendous responsibility of kingship. He prays that he may be led to rule with "mercy and truth." "Thus," he says, "I will sing praise to Thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows." These words are characteristic of David's habit of

Note on Ps. LXI. using his common sense to help him to a righteous way of life. They show how fully he understood the value of the practical form of worship that con-

PSALM LXIII.

A Psalm of David when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

O God, Thou art my God; early will I seek Thee: my soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; 2 To see Thy power and Thy glory, so as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary. 3 Because thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee. 4 Thus will I bless Thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in Thy name. 5 My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips: 6 When I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches. 7 Because Thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice. 8 My soul followeth hard after Thee: Thy right hand upholdeth me. 9 But those that seek my soul, to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth. 10 They shall fall by the sword: they shall be a portion for foxes. 11 But the king shall rejoice in God; every one that sweareth by Him shall glory: but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.

sists of striving day by day and hour by hour, in little things as well as in great things, to fulfil all our duties to the best of our powers.

Note on Ps. LXI.

LXIII. סג

מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד בְּהִיוֹתוֹ בְּמִדְבַּר יְהוּדָה׃

אֱלֹהִים | אֵלִי אַתָּה אֲשַׁחֲרֶךָּ צָמְאָה לְךָ | נַפְשִׁי
כָּמַהּ לְךָ בְשָׂרִי בְּאֶרֶץ־צִיָּה וְעָיֵף בְּלִי־מָיִם׃ 2 כֵּן
בַּקodֶשׁ חֲזִיתִךָ לִרְאוֹת עֻזְּךָ וּכְבוֹדֶךָ׃ 3 כִּי־טוֹב חַסְדְּךָ
מֵחַיִּים שְׂפָתַי יְשַׁבְּחוּנָךְ׃ 4 כֵּן אֲבָרֶכְךָ בְחַיָּי בְּשִׁמְךָ
אֶשָּׂא כַפָּי׃ 5 כְּמוֹ חֵלֶב וָדֶשֶׁן תִּשְׂבַּע נַפְשִׁי וְשִׂפְתֵי
רְנָנוֹת יְהַלֶּל־פִּי׃ 6 אִם זְכַרְתִּיךָ עַל־יְצוּעָי בְּאַשְׁמֻרוֹת
אֶהְגֶּה־בָּךְ׃ 7 כִּי־הָיִיתָ עֶזְרָתָה לִּי וּבְצֵל כְּנָפֶיךָ אֲרַנֵּן׃
8 דָּבְקָה נַפְשִׁי אַחֲרֶיךָ בִּי תָמְכָה יְמִינֶךָ׃ 9 וְהֵמָּה
לְשׁוֹאָה יְבַקְשׁוּ נַפְשִׁי יָבֹאוּ בְּתַחְתִּיּוֹת הָאָרֶץ׃
10 יַגִּירֻהוּ עַל־יְדֵי־חָרֶב מְנָת שְׁעָלִים יִהְיוּ׃ 11 וְהַמֶּלֶךְ
יִשְׂמַח בֵּאלֹהִים יִתְהַלֵּל כָּל־הַנִּשְׁבָּע בּוֹ כִּי יִסָּכֵר
פִּי דּוֹבְרֵי־שָׁקֶר׃

Note on Ps. LXIII. In this song of prayer David pours out his longing for nearness to God. He felt that life would be poor and incomplete unless all its work and effort were dedicated to the glory of God, and that ever-present thought inspired in him a noble and heroic attitude at all times, and when he became a great king, it prevented his becoming arrogant and vain. "Lord, my heart is not haughty nor mine eye lofty," he cries in one of his prayer-poems.

His ardent love and whole-hearted devotion to God brought the comforting and courage-giving belief that whatever happens is for the best, and that

PSALM LXV.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm and Song of David.

PRAISE waiteth for Thee, O God, in *Zion*: and unto Thee shall the vow be performed. 2 O Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come. 3 Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, Thou shalt purge them away. 4 Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest, and causeth to approach unto Thee, that he may dwell in Thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of Thy house, even of Thy holy temple.

5 By terrible things in righteousness wilt Thou answer us, O God of our salvation; Who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea: 6 Which by His strength setteth fast the mountains; being girded

the Infinite wisdom and mercy of God is ever over us all. David's own self seems to be brought very near us in these Psalms. The poet-king, who lived three thousand years ago in a far-off land, speaks to us like a familiar friend. We seem to know the very ring of his voice, as he comforts us and cheers us in times of trouble and trial, by telling us of the trials he himself has gone through. We see that his difficulties were just the same as ours are, and that if our souls "follow hard after" God, the same perfect faith in God that sustained David through his troubles will sustain us too.

Note on Ps. LXIII.

LXV. סה

לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד שִׁיר׃

לְךָ דֻמִיָּה תְהִלָּה ׀ אֱלֹהִים בְּצִיּוֹן וּלְךָ יְשֻׁלַּם־נֶדֶר׃
2 שֹׁמֵעַ תְּפִלָּה עָדֶיךָ כָּל־בָּשָׂר יָבֹאוּ׃ 3 דִּבְרֵי עֲוֹנֹת
גָּבְרוּ מֶנִּי פְּשָׁעֵינוּ אַתָּה תְכַפְּרֵם׃ 4 אַשְׁרֵי ׀ תִּבְחַר
וּתְקָרֵב יִשְׁכֹּן חֲצֵרֶיךָ נִשְׂבְּעָה בְּטוּב בֵּיתֶךָ קְדֹשׁ
הֵיכָלֶךָ׃ 5 נוֹרָאוֹת ׀ בְּצֶדֶק תַּעֲנֵנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֵנוּ מִבְטָח
כָּל־קַצְוֵי־אֶרֶץ וְיָם רְחֹקִים׃ 6 מֵכִין הָרִים בְּכֹחוֹ
נֶאְזָר בִּגְבוּרָה׃ 7 מַשְׁבִּיחַ ׀ שְׁאוֹן יַמִּים שְׁאוֹן גַּלֵּיהֶם

Ps. LXV. with power: 7 Which stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people. 8 They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid at Thy tokens:

Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice. 9 Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: Thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: Thou preparest them corn, when Thou hast so provided for it. 10 Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: Thou settlest the furrows thereof: Thou makest it soft with showers: Thou blessest the springing thereof. 11 Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness; and Thy paths drop fatness. 12 They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills rejoice on every side. 13 The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.

Note on Ps. LXV. The first four verses of the 65th Psalm picture our dependence on the help of God, and the blessing of being able to pour out the inmost feelings of our heart in prayer to Him.

The comforting thought that earnest prayer direct from the human heart is ever acceptable to our Almighty Father is the very essence of our faith. David repeats it in Psalm after Psalm, and in many different ways,—none more beautiful than the noble words of this Psalm, "O Thou that hearest prayer, to Thee shall all flesh come." The third and the fourth verses picture the strength that comes to us from prayer and from trust in the goodness of God.

Ps. LXV.

וַהֲמוֹן לְאֻמִּים׃ 8 וַיִּירְאוּ | יֹשְׁבֵי קְצָוֹת מֵאוֹתֹתֶיךָ
מוֹצָאֵי בֹקֶר וָעֶרֶב תַּרְנִין׃ 9 פָּקַדְתָּ הָאָרֶץ וַתְּשֹׁקְקֶהָ רַבַּת
תַּעְשְׁרֶנָּה פֶּלֶג אֱלֹהִים מָלֵא מָיִם תָּכִין דְּגָנָם כִּי כֵן
תְּכִינֶהָ׃ 10 תְּלָמֶיהָ רַוֵּה נַחֵת גְּדוּדֶהָ בִּרְבִיבִים
תְּמֹגְגֶנָּה צִמְחָהּ | תְּבָרֵךְ׃ 11 עִטַּרְתָּ שְׁנַת טוּבָתֶךָ
וּמַעְגָּלֶיךָ יִרְעֲפוּן דָּשֶׁן׃ 12 יִרְאֲפוּ נְאוֹת מִדְבָּר וְגִיל
גְּבָעוֹת תַּחְגֹּרָנָה׃ 13 לָבְשׁוּ כָרִים | הַצֹּאן וַעֲמָקִים
יַעֲטְפוּ־בָר יִתְרוֹעֲעוּ אַף־יָשִׁירוּ׃

Note on Ps. LXV.

It is very wonderful to think that when King David sang this Psalm, the Israelites alone of all the people in the world realized the truth that God is the Creator of the whole world. While the Egyptian kings with all their elaborate civilization worshipped bulls and a whole number of gods and goddesses, and the Greeks attributed a separate personified deity to every force of nature, the Israelites raised their voices in prayer to the one God, "the Trust of all the ends of the earth and of them that are afar off on the seas,"—the Almighty God, Whose universal dominion is so beautifully pictured in this Psalm.

The fifth verse leads to the awe-inspiring thought

Note on Ps. LXV. of the Infinite power of the Almighty, and the thought of the Divine goodness is completed with a picture of the beneficent ordering of the world that God has given us to dwell in. Thus

PSALM LXVI.

To the Chief Musician. A Song and Psalm.

MAKE a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands: 2 Sing forth the honour of His name: make His praise glorious. 3 Say unto God, How awful are Thy works! through the greatness of Thy power shall Thine enemies submit themselves unto Thee. 4 All the earth shall worship Thee, and shall sing unto Thee; they shall sing to Thy name. Selah.

5 Come and see the works of God: He is awful in His doing toward the children of men. 6 He turned the sea into dry land: they went through the flood on foot: there did we rejoice in Him. 7 He ruleth by His power for ever; His eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah.

8 O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of His praise to be heard: 9 Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved. 10 For Thou, O God, hast proved us: Thou hast tried us, as silver is tried. 11 Thou broughtest us into the net; Thou laidst affliction upon our loins. 12 Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but Thou

the three parts of the Psalm express three great thoughts about God, His lovingkindness, His power, and the culminating thought of the manifestation of both in the wonder and beauty of His works.

Note on Ps. LXV.

LXVI. סו

לַמְנַצֵּחַ שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר

הָרִיעוּ לֵאלֹהִים כָּל־הָאָרֶץ׃ 2 זַמְּרוּ כְּבוֹד־שְׁמוֹ
שִׂימוּ כָבוֹד תְּהִלָּתוֹ׃ 3 אִמְרוּ לֵאלֹהִים מַה־נּוֹרָא
מַעֲשֶׂיךָ בְּרֹב עֻזְּךָ יְכַחֲשׁוּ־לְךָ אֹיְבֶיךָ׃ 4 כָּל־הָאָרֶץ |
יִשְׁתַּחֲוּו לְךָ וִיזַמְּרוּ־לָךְ יְזַמְּרוּ שְׁמֶךָ סֶלָה׃ 5 לְכוּ
וִרְאוּ מִפְעֲלוֹת אֱלֹהִים נוֹרָא עֲלִילָה עַל־בְּנֵי
אָדָם׃ 6 הָפַךְ יָם | לְיַבָּשָׁה בַּנָּהָר יַעַבְרוּ בְרַגֶל
שָׁם נִשְׂמְחָה־בּוֹ׃ 7 מֹשֵׁל בִּגְבוּרָתוֹ | עוֹלָם
עֵינָיו בַּגּוֹיִם תִּצְפֶּינָה הַסּוֹרְרִים | אַל־יָרִימוּ לָמוֹ סֶלָה׃
8 בָּרְכוּ עַמִּים | אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהַשְׁמִיעוּ קוֹל תְּהִלָּתוֹ׃ 9 הַשָּׂם
נַפְשֵׁנוּ בַחַיִּים וְלֹא־נָתַן לַמּוֹט רַגְלֵנוּ׃ 10 כִּי־בְחַנְתָּנוּ
אֱלֹהִים צְרַפְתָּנוּ כִּצְרֹף־כָּסֶף׃ 11 הֲבֵאתָנוּ בַמְּצוּדָה
שַׂמְתָּ מוּעָקָה בְמָתְנֵינוּ׃ 12 הִרְכַּבְתָּ אֱנוֹשׁ לְרֹאשֵׁנוּ
בָּאנוּ־בָאֵשׁ וּבַמָּיִם וַתּוֹצִיאֵנוּ לָרְוָיָה׃ 13 אָבוֹא בֵיתְךָ

Ps. LXVI. broughtest us out into a wealthy place. 13 I will go into Thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay Thee my vows, 14 Which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble. 15 I will offer unto Thee burnt sacrifices of fatlings, with the incense of rams; I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah.

16 Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul. 17 I cried unto Him with my mouth, and He was extolled with my tongue. 18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the LORD will not hear me: 19 But verily God hath heard me; He hath attended to the voice of my prayer. 20 Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor His mercy from me.

Note on Ps. LXVI. This is a prayer of thanksgiving for safety and peace after suffering and peril. The Psalmist recalls the great rescue of all Israel from slavery in Egypt by the awe-inspiring power of God.

Not only were the bodies of our ancestors freed from slavery, but also their souls were freed to soar to God, their Saviour:—"Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved" (verse 9).

Affliction teaches us to realize our own powerlessness, and impels us to turn for help to the Most High. As silver is tried in the furnace and purified, so are we tried and purified by affliction, which inspires us to seek communion with God. In times of prosperity we are too apt to forget what we owe at every moment of life to His lovingkindness and mercy towards us, and perhaps even to forget and to break

Ps. LXVI.

בְּעוֹלוֹת אֲשַׁלֵּם לְךָ נְדָרָי׃ 14 אֲשֶׁר־פָּצוּ שְׂפָתָי וְדִבֶּר־
פִּי בַּצַּר־לִי׃ 15 עֹלוֹת מֵיחִים אַעֲלֶה־לָּךְ עִם־קְטֹרֶת
אֵילִים אֶעֱשֶׂה בָקָר עִם־עַתּוּדִים סֶלָה׃ 16 לְכוּ שִׁמְעוּ
וַאֲסַפְּרָה כָּל־יִרְאֵי אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְנַפְשִׁי׃
17 אֵלָיו פִּי־קָרָאתִי וְרוֹמַם תַּחַת לְשׁוֹנִי׃ 18 אָוֶן אִם־
רָאִיתִי בְלִבִּי לֹא יִשְׁמַע | אֲדֹנָי׃ 19 אָכֵן שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִים
הִקְשִׁיב בְּקוֹל תְּפִלָּתִי׃ 20 בָּרוּךְ אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־
הֵסִיר תְּפִלָּתִי וְחַסְדּוֹ מֵאִתִּי׃

Note on Ps. LXVI.

the good resolutions made when we were in dire trouble. Not so our Psalmist, who says, "I will pay Thee my vows, which my lips have spoken when I was in trouble. I will offer unto Thee burnt sacrifices" (verses 13, 14, 15). Our offerings and our sacrifices no longer take the form of the burning of fatlings and the slaughter of bullocks. But the spirit in which our shepherd forefathers brought the choicest of their flocks and herds to dedicate to the altar of God is the same spirit in which we must strive now and always to worship Him, by making the highest efforts in our power to be truthful and just, loving and generous, in every wish and thought and act of our lives.

Then we may dare to hope that God will not turn away our prayer, nor His mercy from us.

PSALM LXVII.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm and Song.

GOD be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause His face to shine upon us; Selah. 2 That Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations.

3 Let the peoples praise Thee, O God; let all the peoples praise Thee. 4 O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for Thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

5 Let the peoples praise Thee, O God; let all the peoples praise Thee. 6 Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us. 7 God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.

Note on Ps. LXVII.

The Psalmist prays to God to give to all nations the blessing of the knowledge of Him—so that all the inhabitants of the earth may understand the loving-kindness and the power of God. ("That thy way may be known on earth, Thy saving health among all nations.")

"Praised be God by all peoples," is the Psalmist's fervent prayer. "Praised" not only by words but

PSALM LXXVII.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of Asaph.

I CRIED unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me. 2 In the day of my trouble I sought the LORD: I stretched forth my hand in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted. 3 I remembered God, and

LXVII. סז

לַמְנַצֵּחַ מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר׃

אֱלֹהִים יְחָנֵּנוּ וִיבָרְכֵנוּ יָאֵר פָּנָיו אִתָּנוּ סֶלָה׃
2 לָדַעַת בָּאָרֶץ דַּרְכֶּךָ בְּכָל־גּוֹיִם יְשׁוּעָתֶךָ׃ 3 יוֹדוּךָ
עַמִּים ׀ אֱלֹהִים יוֹדוּךָ עַמִּים כֻּלָּם׃ 4 יִשְׂמְחוּ וִירַנְּנוּ
לְאֻמִּים כִּי־תִשְׁפֹּט עַמִּים מִישֹׁר וּלְאֻמִּים ׀ בָּאָרֶץ
תַּנְחֵם סֶלָה׃ 5 יוֹדוּךָ עַמִּים ׀ אֱלֹהִים יוֹדוּךָ עַמִּים
כֻּלָּם׃ 6 אֶרֶץ נָתְנָה יְבוּלָהּ יְבָרְכֵנוּ אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵינוּ׃
7 יְבָרְכֵנוּ אֱלֹהִים וְיִירְאוּ אֹתוֹ כָּל־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ׃

by conduct, for the thought of the goodness of God helps all mankind to be always trying to be good and to do good. Note on Ps. LXVII

What a noble spirit of universal peace and good-will on earth breathes through this Psalm—inspired by faith in the one Almighty God, Creator of all, ruling, with infinite power and infinite pity, the whole world and all that is therein.

LXXVII. עז

לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְאָסָף מִזְמוֹר׃

קוֹלִי אֶל־אֱלֹהִים וְאֶצְעָקָה קוֹלִי אֶל־אֱלֹהִים וְהַאֲזִין
אֵלָי׃ 2 בְּיוֹם צָרָתִי אֲדֹנָי דָּרָשְׁתִּי יָדִי ׀ לַיְלָה נֻגְּרָה
וְלֹא תָפוּג מֵאֲנָה הִנָּחֵם נַפְשִׁי׃ 3 אֶזְכְּרָה אֱלֹהִים

Ps. LXXVII.

was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah.

4 Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak. 5 I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times. 6 I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search. 7 Will the LORD cast off for ever? and will He be favourable no more? 8 Is His mercy clean gone for ever? doth His promise fail for evermore? 9 Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies? Selah.

10 And I said, This is my trial: but the years of the right hand of the most High will I remember. 11 Even the works of the LORD: surely I will remember Thy wonders of old. 12 I will meditate also of all Thy work, and talk of Thy doings. 13 Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God? 14 Thou art the God that doest wonders: Thou hast declared Thy strength among the people. 15 Thou hast with Thine arm redeemed Thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah.

16 The waters saw Thee, O God, the waters saw Thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled. 17 The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: Thine arrows also went abroad. 18 The voice of Thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook. 19 Thy way is in the sea, and Thy path in the great waters, and Thy footsteps are not known. 20 Thou leddest Thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Ps. LXXVII.

וְאֶהֱמְיָה אָשִׂיחָה | וְתִתְעַטֵּף רוּחִי סֶלָה: 4 אָחַזְתָּ
שְׁמֻרוֹת עֵינָי נִפְעַמְתִּי וְלֹא אֲדַבֵּר: 5 חִשַּׁבְתִּי יָמִים
מִקֶּדֶם שְׁנוֹת עוֹלָמִים: 6 אֶזְכְּרָה נְגִינָתִי בַלָּיְלָה עִם־
לְבָבִי אָשִׂיחָה וַיְחַפֵּשׂ רוּחִי: 7 הַלְעוֹלָמִים יִזְנַח |
אֲדֹנָי וְלֹא יֹסִיף לִרְצוֹת עוֹד: 8 הֶאָפֵס לָנֶצַח חַסְדּוֹ
גָּמַר אֹמֶר לְדֹר וָדֹר: 9 הֲשָׁכַח חַנּוֹת אֵל אִם־קָפַץ
בְּאַף רַחֲמָיו סֶלָה: 10 וָאֹמַר חַלּוֹתִי הִיא שְׁנוֹת יְמִין
עֶלְיוֹן: 11 אֶזְכִּיר מַעַלְלֵי־יָהּ כִּי־אֶזְכְּרָה מִקֶּדֶם פִּלְאֶךָ:
12 וְהָגִיתִי בְכָל־פָּעֳלֶךָ וּבַעֲלִילוֹתֶיךָ אָשִׂיחָה: 13 אֱלֹהִים
בַּקֹּדֶשׁ דַּרְכֶּךָ מִי אֵל גָּדוֹל כֵּאלֹהִים: 14 אַתָּה הָאֵל
עֹשֵׂה פֶלֶא הוֹדַעְתָּ בָעַמִּים עֻזֶּךָ: 15 גָּאַלְתָּ בִזְרוֹעַ
עַמֶּךָ בְּנֵי־יַעֲקֹב וְיוֹסֵף סֶלָה: 16 רָאוּךָ מַיִם |
אֱלֹהִים רָאוּךָ מַיִם יָחִילוּ אַף יִרְגְּזוּ תְהֹמוֹת: 17 זָרְמוּ
מַיִם | עָבוֹת קוֹל נָתְנוּ שְׁחָקִים אַף־חִצֶּיךָ יִתְהַלָּכוּ:
18 קוֹל רַעַמְךָ בַּגַּלְגַּל | הֵאִירוּ בְרָקִים תֵּבֵל רָגְזָה
וַתִּרְעַשׁ הָאָרֶץ: 19 בַּיָּם | דַּרְכֶּךָ וּשְׁבִילְךָ בְּמַיִם רַבִּים
וְעִקְּבוֹתֶיךָ לֹא נוֹדָעוּ: 20 נָחִיתָ כַצֹּאן עַמֶּךָ בְּיַד־
מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן:

Note on Ps. LXXVII. When we feel down-hearted and discouraged it is good to read this Psalm. The Psalmist realizes that the right hand of the Most High has brought him adversity instead of his former happiness as a trial of the steadfastness of his faith. He shakes off his doubts and fears as he recalls the remembrance of the wondrous works of God, His Infinite power,

PSALM LXXX.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of Asaph.

GIVE ear, O Shepherd of Israel, Thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; Thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth. 2 Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh stir up Thy strength, and come and save us.

3 Turn us again, O God, and cause Thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

4 O LORD God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of Thy people? 5 Thou feedest them with the bread of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure. 6 Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours: and our enemies laugh among themselves.

7 Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause Thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

8 Thou has brought a vine out of Egypt: Thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it. 9 Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. 10 The hills were

and His Infinite lovingkindness. So we too can gather courage and comfort as we think of God's "great and gracious work." We realize that God leads us too, even as He led His people by the hand of Moses and Aaron, and that we have but to trust in Him, and try at all times to obey His laws. Then we need fear no evil, for we know He is ever with us.

Note on Ps. LXXVII.

LXXX. פ

לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְאָסָף מִזְמוֹר׃

רֹעֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל | הַאֲזִינָה נֹהֵג כַּצֹּאן יוֹסֵף יֹשֵׁב
הַכְּרוּבִים הוֹפִיעָה׃ 2 לִפְנֵי אֶפְרַיִם | וּבִנְיָמִן וּמְנַשֶּׁה
עוֹרְרָה אֶת־גְּבוּרָתֶךָ וּלְכָה לִישֵׁעָתָה לָּנוּ׃ 3 אֱלֹהִים
הֲשִׁיבֵנוּ וְהָאֵר פָּנֶיךָ וְנִוָּשֵׁעָה׃ 4 יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת
עַד־מָתַי עָשַׁנְתָּ בִּתְפִלַּת עַמֶּךָ׃ 5 הֶאֱכַלְתָּם לֶחֶם
דִּמְעָה וַתַּשְׁקֵמוֹ בְּדִמְעוֹת שָׁלִישׁ׃ 6 תְּשִׂימֵנוּ מָרוֹן
לִשְׁכֵנֵינוּ וְאֹיְבֵינוּ יִלְעֲגוּ־לָמוֹ׃ 7 אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת
הֲשִׁיבֵנוּ וְהָאֵר פָּנֶיךָ וְנִוָּשֵׁעָה׃ 8 גֶּפֶן מִמִּצְרַיִם תַּסִּיעַ
תְּגָרֵשׁ גּוֹיִם וַתִּטָּעֶהָ׃ 9 פִּנִּיתָ לְפָנֶיהָ וַתַּשְׁרֵשׁ שָׁרָשֶׁיהָ
וַתְּמַלֵּא־אָרֶץ׃ 10 כָּסּוּ הָרִים צִלָּהּ וַעֲנָפֶיהָ אַרְזֵי אֵל׃

Ps. LXXX. covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars. 11 She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river. 12 Why hast Thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her? 13 The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.

14 Return, we beseech Thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine; 15 And the vineyard which Thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that Thou madest strong for thyself. 16 It is burned with fire, it is cut down: they perish at the rebuke of Thy countenance.

17 Let Thy hand be upon the man of Thy right hand, upon the son of man whom Thou hast chosen for Thyself. 18 So shall we not go back from Thee: quicken Thou us, and we will call upon Thy name.

19 Turn us again, O LORD God of hosts, cause Thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

Note on Ps. LXXX. THE author of Psalm lxxx. must have been a countryman, like David who tended his father's sheep, and like the prophet Amos who was a herdsman in the hills of Tekoa. The imagery of the Psalm is inspired by the thought of vineyards, and of the beasts of the fields and the forest.

The Psalmist pictures God as the Shepherd of Israel—but the flock has strayed from the care of the shepherd into a perilous place. Then comes the prayer of the chorus verse, repeated after each stanza of the Psalm (verses 3, 7, 14, slightly varied but essentially the same, and 19), "Turn us again, O God, and cause Thy face to shine, and we shall be saved."

Ps. LXXX.

11 תִּשְׁלַח קְצִירֶיהָ עַד־יָם וְאֶל־נָהָר יוֹנְקוֹתֶיהָ׃ 12 לָמָּה
פָּרַצְתָּ גְדֵרֶיהָ וְאָרוּהָ כָּל־עֹבְרֵי דָּרֶךְ׃ 13 יְכַרְסְמֶנָּה
חֲזִיר מִיָּעַר וְזִיז שָׂדַי יִרְעֶנָּה׃ 14 אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת
שׁוּב נָא הַבֵּט מִשָּׁמַיִם וּרְאֵה וּפְקֹד גֶּפֶן זֹאת׃
15 וְכַנָּה אֲשֶׁר־נָטְעָה יְמִינֶךָ וְעַל־בֵּן אִמַּצְתָּה לָּךְ׃
16 שְׂרֻפָה בָאֵשׁ כְּסוּחָה מִגַּעֲרַת פָּנֶיךָ יאבֵדוּ׃
17 תְּהִי־יָדְךָ עַל־אִישׁ יְמִינֶךָ עַל־בֶּן־אָדָם אִמַּצְתָּ לָּךְ׃
18 וְלֹא־נָסוֹג מִמֶּךָּ תְּחַיֵּינוּ וּבְשִׁמְךָ נִקְרָא׃ 19 יְהוָה
אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת הֲשִׁיבֵנוּ הָאֵר פָּנֶיךָ וְנִוָּשֵׁעָה׃

Note on Ps. LXXX.

The picture of God's care of Israel under the parable of the vine, planted deep down in the chosen ground, flourishing and spreading over the land, is drawn with the master touch of one familiar with the work of vineyards.

The main thought of the Psalm is brought vividly before us in the imagery of these two parables, the forlorn flock and the unprotected vine.

The imagery of the hedge round the vine depicts Israel's consciousness of a great religious mission. When that consciousness is lost, Israel becomes defenceless, a prey to every marauder; and through his own loss of godliness brings about his own desolation.

Note on Ps. LXXX.

Quitting imagery, the Psalmist prays the simple, earnest prayer, "May Thy hand be on the man of Thy right hand, on the son of the man Thou hast chosen unto Thyself." The prayer expresses the heart's desire of the poet of Israel, and his mindfulness of the proud heritage of his race, as God's chosen messenger.

The word "man" occurs twice in the English version of the seventeenth verse, but the Hebrew has no repeated word. אִישׁ יְמִינֶךָ, "the man of Thy right hand," corresponds closely to the English epithet "right-hand man," and means the man who is upheld by Thy right hand. In the second half of the verse בֶּן אָדָם, literally "son of Adam," means

PSALM LXXXI.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of Asaph.

SING aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob. 2 Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery. 3 Blow the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day. 4 For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob. 5 This he ordained in Joseph for a testimony, when he went out through the land of Egypt: where I heard a language that I understood not.

6 I removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands were delivered from the pots. 7 Thou calledst in trouble, and I delivered thee; I answered thee in

all mankind. Thus the Psalmist's prayer is that the hand of God may be on the man (in the collective sense of the *race*) chosen from among all mankind to be the messenger of God, while the last verse utters a prayer for the salvation of all mankind by whole-hearted faith in God. Note on Ps. LXXX.

Through two thousand years of suffering and oppression Israel has been "quickened" (in the old sense of the word, "made to live") by the consciousness of his great and comforting mission to mankind, to voice the truth of the unity of God and of the direct communion (with no mediator, divine or human,) between God and the soul of every human being.

LXXXI. פא

לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְאָסָף׃

הַרְנִינוּ לֵאלֹהִים עוּזֵּנוּ* הָרִיעוּ לֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב׃
2 שְׂאוּ־זִמְרָה וְתִנוּ־תֹף כִּנּוֹר נָעִים עִם־נָבֶל׃ 3 תִּקְעוּ
בַחֹדֶשׁ שׁוֹפָר בַּכֶּסֶה לְיוֹם חַגֵּנוּ׃ 4 כִּי חֹק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל
הוּא מִשְׁפָּט לֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב׃ 5 עֵדוּת | בִּיהוֹסֵף שָׂמוֹ
בְּצֵאתוֹ עַל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם שְׂפַת לֹא־יָדַעְתִּי אֶשְׁמָע׃
6 הֲסִירוֹתִי מִסֵּבֶל שִׁכְמוֹ כַּפָּיו מִדּוּד תַּעֲבֹרְנָה׃

Ps. LXXXI. the secret place of thunder: I proved thee at the waters of Meribah. Selah. 8 Hear, O My people, and I will testify unto thee: O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto Me; 9 There shall no strange god be in thee; neither shalt thou worship any strange god. 10 I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it. 11 But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of Me. 12 So I gave them up unto their own heart's lust: and they walked in their own counsels. 13 Oh that My people had hearkened unto Me, and Israel had walked in My ways! 14 I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned My hand against their adversaries. 15 The haters of the LORD should have submitted themselves unto Him: but their time should have endured for ever. 16 He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.

Note on Ps. LXXXI.

The eighty-first Psalm begins with a cheerful call to song and music in honour of God.

When we are thinking about God, the sound of noble music seems to echo the thoughts which are in our minds, but which we cannot put into words. There are many beautiful songs in the Bible besides the Book of Psalms; for the heroes of Israel were wont to use music and poetry to express their deepest feelings.

Thus Moses sang a song of thanksgiving after the great deliverance of Israel at the Red Sea, and forty

Ps. LXXXI.

7 בַּצָּרָה קָרָאתָ וָאֲחַלְּצֶךָּ אֶעֱנְךָ בְּסֵתֶר רַעַם אֶבְחָנְךָ
עַל־מֵי מְרִיבָה סֶלָה׃ 8 שְׁמַע עַמִּי וְאָעִידָה בָּךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל
אִם־תִּשְׁמַע־לִי׃ 9 לֹא־יִהְיֶה בְךָ אֵל זָר וְלֹא תִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה
לְאֵל נֵכָר׃ 10 אָנֹכִי ׀ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ הַמַּעַלְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ
מִצְרָיִם הַרְחֶב־פִּיךָ וַאֲמַלְאֵהוּ׃ 11 וְלֹא־שָׁמַע עַמִּי לְקוֹלִי
וְיִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא־אָבָה לִי׃ 12 וָאֲשַׁלְּחֵהוּ בִּשְׁרִירוּת לִבָּם
יֵלְכוּ בְּמוֹעֲצוֹתֵיהֶם׃ 13 לוּ עַמִּי שֹׁמֵעַ לִי יִשְׂרָאֵל
בִּדְרָכַי יְהַלֵּכוּ׃ 14 כִּמְעַט אוֹיְבֵיהֶם אַכְנִיעַ וְעַל־צָרֵיהֶם
אָשִׁיב יָדִי׃ 15 מְשַׂנְאֵי יְהוָה יְכַחֲשׁוּ־לוֹ וְיִהְיֶה עִתָּם
לְעוֹלָם׃ 16 וַיַּאֲכִלֵהוּ מֵחֶלֶב חִטָּה וּמִצּוּר דְּבַשׁ
אַשְׂבִּיעֶךָּ׃

Note on Ps. LXXXI.

years later his last words to the children of Israel before his death were in the form of a great elegiac song.

King David, a poet and musician himself, perceived that music is the best language of worship, and instituted a daily service of song by the Levites in charge of the ark.* In the history of the world

* The heading "For the Chief Musician" which occurs in so many of the Psalms doubtless means that these Psalms were destined for use in this daily service of song.

Note on Ps. LXXXI.

these are the first recorded daily prayer-services as distinguished from sacrificial offerings. They were the model, not only for the prayer-services of the Temple and the Synagogue, but for every modern form of prayer-service to this day. Wherever a congregation gathers for the worship of God, in synagogue, cathedral, chapel, or mosque, the congregants take part in a service modelled on the service of song established by King David 3,000 years ago.

After the stirring call to song and praise, a word in the fifth verse recalls Israel's slavery in Egypt, and then the Psalmist pictures God Himself speaking to Israel, reminding them how He rescued them from slavery and cherished them, and revealed His Law to them. "But my people would not hearken to My voice."

The last ten verses of the Psalm recall the lines in *Paradise Lost* in which the Almighty is pictured as saying of Adam:—

> "He and his faithless progeny. Whose fault?
> Whose but his own? I made him just and right,
> Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall."

But the tenderness of the Divine reproach in the Psalm, is strikingly absent in Milton's poem.

The moral teaching of the 13th, 14th, and 15th verses is illustrated throughout the history of the

PSALM LXXXII.

A Psalm of Asaph.

God standeth in the congregation of God: He judgeth among the judges. 2 How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked?

world. So long as nations are dominated by lofty and pure ideals—implying the virtues of self-sacrifice and self-control—so long they remain mighty. But whenever selfishness and self-indulgence have taken possession of them, they have lost their might, and their capacity for ruling, and have sunk out of existence. The Israelites could only triumph over their enemies when they triumphed over themselves, and proved themselves worthy to be God's chosen people. The triumph of Israel therefore meant the triumph of goodness. Thus we come to see the real meaning clothed by the Psalmist in the majestic imagery of God turning His hand against the adversaries of Israel.

Note on Ps. LXXXI.

It is the sacred duty of every Israelite to shun those "strange gods" of selfishness, greed, indifference to human suffering, and self-indulgence, that taint the purity of the human soul even more fatally than the image worship of primitive times. However humble our lot may be, it is within the power of us all to strive toward this ideal if we do but fully realize the meaning of the farewell words of Moses: "For this commandment which I command thee this day is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. But the word is very nigh to thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it."

LXXXII. פב

מִזְמוֹר לְאָסָף׃

אֱלֹהִים נִצָּב בַּעֲדַת־אֵל בְּקֶרֶב אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁפֹּט׃

2 עַד־מָתַי תִּשְׁפְּטוּ־עָוֶל וּפְנֵי רְשָׁעִים תִּשְׂאוּ־סֶלָה׃

Ps. LXXXII. Selah. 3 Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy. 4 Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked. 5 They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course. 6 I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High. 7 But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes. 8 Arise, O God, judge the earth: for Thou shalt inherit all nations.

Note on Ps. LXXXII. This impressive exhortation of Asaph tells a sorrowful tale between its lines. Judges charged in the name of the Supreme Judge of all with the solemn duty of preventing wrong being done to their fellow-beings, had betrayed their sacred trust, and had judged unjustly and favoured evil-doers. Asaph mourns their sin in the terrible words, "All the foundations of the earth are out of course," i.e. the moral foundations on which the well-being of mankind depend.

It is natural that unjust judges should be held in peculiar horror and contempt by the "People of the Book," and Asaph's words bring the feeling vividly before us.

The equal right of every human being, however lowly, to personal justice is repeatedly and emphatically proclaimed in the Laws of Moses. The passage in Exodus, chap. 21, "Thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth," &c., has sometimes been misinterpreted as a harsh and cruel law, comparing unfavourably with the teachings of the New Testament. But that comparison leaves out

Ps. LXXXII.

3 שִׁפְטוּ־דָל וְיָתוֹם עָנִי וָרָשׁ הַצְדִּיקוּ׃ 4 פַּלְּטוּ־דַל
וְאֶבְיוֹן מִיַּד רְשָׁעִים הַצִּילוּ׃ 5 לֹא יָדְעוּ | וְלֹא־יָבִינוּ
בַּחֲשֵׁכָה יִתְהַלָּכוּ יִמּוֹטוּ כָּל מוֹסְדֵי אָרֶץ׃ 6 אֲנִי
אָמַרְתִּי אֱלֹהִים אַתֶּם וּבְנֵי עֶלְיוֹן כֻּלְּכֶם׃ 7 אָכֵן
כְּאָדָם תְּמוּתוּן וּכְאַחַד הַשָּׂרִים תִּפֹּלוּ׃ 8 קוּמָה
אֱלֹהִים שָׁפְטָה הָאָרֶץ כִּי־אַתָּה תִנְחַל בְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם׃

Note on Ps. LXXXII.

of account the essential difference between the *Law*, which is an evenhanded instrument of justice to protect both the weak and the powerful, and *sermons*, which are moral precepts based on the Law. The *precepts* of the prophets and preachers are based on the *Laws* of Moses. The passage in Exodus quoted above lays down the law on the sacred value of life and bodily powers. The life and limbs of the slave are as precious as those of the prince, and the penalty of depriving a fellow-creature of them must be the same in either case. But the rigid fairness and rectitude enjoined in the Mosaic Law, and above all in the Ten Commandments, did not mean either harshness or cruelty; on the contrary the Law of Moses is conceived in the very spirit of mercy and kindness: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as Thyself" (Leviticus xix. 18). "Love ye the stranger, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Deuteronomy x. 19). "Let thy manservant and thy maidservant rest as well as thou" (Deuteronomy v. 14). These are the keynotes of the Mosaic Law, which enjoins kind and considerate treatment of the unfortunate

Note on Ps. LXXXII.

and afflicted and of dependants, and punctual payment for all service, generous treatment of faithful servants and charity to the poor—not as the outcome of passing pity or generosity but as a perpetual binding duty.* It also contains humane provisions in regard to many matters (such as the prevention of cruelty to animals, and of wanton waste of bird life, safeguards against dangerous buildings, &c.) only dealt with by statute in this country as recently as the Victorian era.† When Asaph calls on the judges to defend the poor and the fatherless, and to do justice to the afflicted and the needy, and rid them out of the hand of the oppressor, he is echoing the very words of Moses.

The crowning law of all, which—as Hillel said—is *The* Law, and all the rest only commentary, is the famous eighteenth verse of the nineteenth chapter of Leviticus:—

"Love thy neighbour as thyself."

The word "neighbour" is used in no narrow sense: "If a stranger sojourn with thee in thy land, ye shall not vex him . . . thou shalt love him as thyself" (Lev. xix. 34).

"Ye shall have one manner of law as well for the stranger as for one of your own country" (Lev. xxiv. 22).

* Leviticus xix. 13, 14; Deuteronomy xvi. 2, xxiv. 15.
† Deuteronomy xxii. 6, 8, 10.

Note on Ps. LXXXII.

The equal right of every human being to justice seems a matter of course to us who live under English law and justice. But even in England before the Habeas Corpus Act (of which Numbers xxxv. 12 and Deuteronomy xix. 15 are the prototype), there was little or no check on arbitrary imprisonment; and to this day, in lands under despotic rule, dark deeds of secret imprisonment without trial are still perpetrated, and favouritism is allowed to interfere with the course of justice.

Very few years ago I heard in Egypt from the lips of one of the persons concerned, an experience that throws curious light on the notions of justice in countries long accustomed to despotic rule. Among the pupils at a large Government School under an English Headmaster was the son of a powerful native Pacha. This boy broke the school rules and was given a punishment task. Next morning the Minister of Education sent for the Headmaster, who found the Pacha angrily complaining to the Minister that the schoolmaster had dared to punish the son of a Pacha. "Why did you order the son of the Pacha to be punished?" said the Minister. "Because he disobeyed our rules," was the answer. "Therefore the son of the Pacha must be punished, or I must resign my post." "It is just;" said the Minister, and turning to the Pacha added, "Your son must be punished." My informant added, "Since then that boy has learned to take punishment quietly like the others."

PSALM LXXXIV.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm for the sons of Korah.

How beloved are Thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!
2 My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. 3 Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even Thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my King, and my God. 4 Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: they will be ever praising Thee. Selah. 5 Blessed among mankind are they whose refuge is in Thee; highways are in their heart. 6 Though they be wayfarers in the valley of tears, they make of them a living fountain, even as the spring rain covereth blessings. 7 They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God. 8 O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah. 9 Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of Thine anointed. 10 For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. 11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly. 12 O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee.

LXXXIV. פד

לַמְנַצֵּחַ לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח מִזְמוֹר׃

מַה־יְּדִידוֹת מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת׃ 2 נִכְסְפָה
וְגַם־כָּלְתָה ׀ נַפְשִׁי לְחַצְרוֹת יְהוָה לִבִּי וּבְשָׂרִי יְרַנְּנוּ
אֶל־אֵל־חָי׃ 3 גַּם־צִפּוֹר ׀ מָצְאָה בַּיִת וּדְרוֹר ׀ קֵן
לָהּ אֲשֶׁר־שָׁתָה אֶפְרֹחֶיהָ אֶת־מִזְבְּחוֹתֶיךָ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת
מַלְכִּי וֵאלֹהָי׃ 4 אַשְׁרֵי יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתֶךָ עוֹד יְהַלְלוּךָ
סֶלָה׃ 5 אַשְׁרֵי אָדָם עוֹז־לוֹ בָּךְ מְסִלּוֹת בִּלְבָבָם׃
6 עֹבְרֵי בְעֵמֶק הַבָּכָא מַעְיָן יְשִׁיתֻהוּ גַּם־בְּרָכוֹת יַעְטֶה
מוֹרֶה׃ 7 יֵלְכוּ מֵחַיִל אֶל־חָיִל יֵרָאֶה אֶל־אֱלֹהִים
בְּצִיּוֹן׃ 8 יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת שִׁמְעָה תְפִלָּתִי
הַאֲזִינָה אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב סֶלָה׃ 9 מָגִנֵּנוּ רְאֵה אֱלֹהִים
וְהַבֵּט פְּנֵי מְשִׁיחֶךָ׃ 10 כִּי טוֹב־יוֹם בַּחֲצֵרֶיךָ מֵאָלָף
בָּחַרְתִּי הִסְתּוֹפֵף בְּבֵית אֱלֹהַי מִדּוּר בְּאָהֳלֵי־רֶשַׁע׃
11 כִּי־שֶׁמֶשׁ ׀ וּמָגֵן יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים חֵן וְכָבוֹד יִתֵּן יְהוָה
לֹא יִמְנַע־טוֹב לַהֹלְכִים בְּתָמִים׃ 12 יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת
אַשְׁרֵי אָדָם בֹּטֵחַ בָּךְ׃

Note on Ps. LXXXIV.

The third verse of the Psalm describes the beautiful ordering of the life of birds, by which those tiny creatures are given the power to make their nests where they can hatch their eggs and rear their young in safety.

These nests are, as it were, altars of praise to God, showing the lovingkindness of His ordering of the Laws of Nature.

This picture of bird life illustrates the thought of the verses that precede and follow it. As with the birds, so it is with human beings; their safety is given them by the lovingkindness of God. The soul of man, longing for communion with God, is only happy when it can dwell with God.

The Psalmist compares the tears of those who trust in God to a spring of pure water, and to the soft showers of rain in February covering "blessings" (i.e. covering the early seeds, and helping their growth).

In this country, where there is generally plenty of

PSALM LXXXV.

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm for the sons of Korah.

LORD, Thou hast been favourable unto Thy land: Thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob. 2 Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of Thy people, Thou hast covered all their sin. Selah. 3 Thou hast taken away all Thy wrath: Thou hast turned Thyself from the fierceness of Thine anger. 4 Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause Thine anger toward us to cease. 5 Wilt Thou be angry with us

rainfall, we can hardly understand the anxious watching for spring rain, and the thankfulness when it comes, in the land of Palestine, where this song was written, and where plenty of rain in the spring means a good summer harvest. Note on Ps. LXXXIV.

The second half of the song expresses in varied images the Psalmist's hope and trust in God.

I think this Psalm helps us to feel brave and trustful in bearing disappointment. "I had rather be a door-keeper (i.e. the humblest of workers) in the house of my God, than dwell (as a rich man) in the tents of wickedness." "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." If we long for a thing very much, we are sometimes tempted to do what is wrong in order to get it. The Psalmist warns us against this. Be true and honest always, and try for what you want by fair and honourable ways. If you fail you will keep your self-respect, and feel that, however humble, you are still a faithful door-keeper in the house of God.

LXXXV. פה

לַמְנַצֵּחַ לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח מִזְמוֹר׃

רָצִיתָ יְהוָה אַרְצֶךָ שַׁבְתָּ שְׁבוּת יַעֲקֹב׃ 2 נָשָׂאתָ
עֲוֹן עַמֶּךָ כִּסִּיתָ כָל־חַטָּאתָם סֶלָה׃ 3 אָסַפְתָּ כָל־
עֶבְרָתֶךָ הֱשִׁיבוֹתָ מֵחֲרוֹן אַפֶּךָ׃ 4 שׁוּבֵנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֵנוּ
וְהָפֵר כַּעַסְךָ עִמָּנוּ׃ 5 הַלְעוֹלָם תֶּאֱנַף־בָּנוּ תִּמְשֹׁךְ

Ps. LXXXV.

for ever? wilt Thou draw out thine anger to all generations? 6 Wilt not Thou turn and revive us again: that Thy people may rejoice in Thee? 7 Shew us Thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us Thy salvation. 8 I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for He will speak peace unto His people, and to His saints: but let them not turn again to folly. 9 Surely His salvation is nigh them that fear Him; that glory may dwell in our land. 10 Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. 11 Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven. 12 Yea, the LORD shall give that which is good; and our land shall yield her increase. 13 Righteousness shall go before Him; and shall set us in the way of His steps.

Note on Ps. LXXXV.

It often happens in Hebrew psalmody that the same word is used in one verse and in the next for a quite different thought, the contrast serving both to link and to divide the two ideas. The word "turn" is used thus in the first, third, fourth, sixth, and ninth verses of this Psalm.[1]

"Thou hast turned the captivity of Jacob. . . . Thou hast turned Thyself from the fierceness of Thine anger. Turn Thou us, O God (i.e. help us to turn from evil to good), so will Thine anger towards us be caused to cease. . . . Wilt not Thou turn and revive us again?"

[1] שׁוּב (the same root as the English "shove") conveys the sense of the English words "turn" and "move," including the emotional meaning of the latter word.

אַפִּיךָ לְרַר וָדָר׃ 6 הֲלֹא־אַתָּה תָּשׁוּב תְּחַיֵּינוּ וְעַמְּךָ Ps. LXXXV.
יִשְׂמְחוּ־בָךְ׃ 7 הַרְאֵנוּ יְהוָה חַסְדֶּךָ וְיֶשְׁעֲךָ תִּתֶּן־לָנוּ׃
8 אֶשְׁמְעָה מַה־יְדַבֵּר הָאֵל | יְהוָה כִּי | יְדַבֵּר שָׁלוֹם
אֶל־עַמּוֹ וְאֶל־חֲסִידָיו וְאַל־יָשׁוּבוּ לְכִסְלָה׃ 9 אַךְ
קָרוֹב לִירֵאָיו יְשׁוּעָתוֹ לִשְׁכֹּן כָּבוֹד בְּאַרְצֵנוּ׃ 10 חֶסֶד־
וֶאֱמֶת נִפְגָּשׁוּ צֶדֶק וְשָׁלוֹם נָשָׁקוּ׃ 11 אֱמֶת מֵאֶרֶץ
תִּצְמָח וְצֶדֶק מִשָּׁמַיִם נִשְׁקָף׃ 12 גַּם יְהוָה יִתֵּן הַטּוֹב
וְאַרְצֵנוּ תִּתֵּן יְבוּלָהּ׃ 13 צֶדֶק לְפָנָיו יְהַלֵּךְ וְיָשֵׂם
לְדֶרֶךְ פְּעָמָיו׃

Note on Ps. LXXXV.

The Psalm opens with a song of thanksgiving (verses 1, 2, 3), followed by a prayer for God's mercy (verses 4, 5, 6, 7), which fills the soul of the Psalmist with hope and the courage of trustfulness, expressed in the next verse: "I will hear what God the Lord will speak, for He will speak peace unto His people and to His saints: but let them not turn again to folly." The meaning of verse 9 is perhaps clearer if we read the second half of the verse, "that *His* glory may dwell in our land." אֱמֶת, truth, in verses 10 and 11 conveys the sense of both truth and faithfulness.

The poem flows on in a series of images inspired by the thought of the harmony of the goodness of God, and the faith of mankind. The second part of

Note on Ps. LXXXV. each verse is an echoing response to the first half. Thus, in verse 10, "Mercy [the Mercy of God] and faithfulness [man's trust in God] are met together." Then comes the response: "Righteousness and peace have kissed each other"—recalling Isaiah's

PSALM LXXXVI.

A Prayer of David.

Bow down Thine ear, O LORD, hear me: for I am poor and needy. 2 Preserve my soul; for I am holy: O Thou my God, save Thy servant that trusteth in Thee. 3 Be merciful unto me, O LORD: for I cry unto Thee all the day long. 4 Rejoice the soul of Thy servant: for unto Thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul. 5 For Thou, LORD, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon Thee. 6 Give ear, O LORD, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplications. 7 In the day of my trouble I will call upon Thee: for Thou wilt answer me. 8 Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O LORD; neither are there any works like unto Thy works. 9 All nations whom Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O LORD; and shall glorify Thy name. 10 For Thou art great, and doest wondrous things: Thou art God alone. 11 Teach me Thy way, O LORD; I will walk in Thy truth: unite my heart to fear Thy name. 12 I will praise Thee, O LORD my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify Thy

words: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace who trusteth in Thee." These four closing verses are grand and musical and peaceful, "like the sound of a great Amen."

Note on Ps. LXXXV.

LXXXVI. פו

תְּפִלָּה לְדָוִד

הַטֵּה יְהוָה אָזְנְךָ עֲנֵנִי כִּי־עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן אָנִי׃ 2 שָׁמְרָה
נַפְשִׁי כִּי־חָסִיד אָנִי הוֹשַׁע עַבְדְּךָ אַתָּה אֱלֹהַי הַבּוֹטֵחַ
אֵלֶיךָ׃ 3 חָנֵּנִי אֲדֹנָי כִּי־אֵלֶיךָ אֶקְרָא כָּל הַיּוֹם׃
4 שַׂמֵּחַ נֶפֶשׁ עַבְדֶּךָ כִּי אֵלֶיךָ אֲדֹנָי נַפְשִׁי אֶשָּׂא׃
5 כִּי־אַתָּה אֲדֹנָי טוֹב וְסַלָּח וְרַב־חֶסֶד לְכָל־קֹרְאֶיךָ׃
6 הַאֲזִינָה יְהוָה תְּפִלָּתִי וְהַקְשִׁיבָה בְּקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנוֹתָי׃
7 בְּיוֹם צָרָתִי אֶקְרָאֶךָּ כִּי תַעֲנֵנִי׃ 8 אֵין־כָּמוֹךָ
בָּאֱלֹהִים | אֲדֹנָי וְאֵין כְּמַעֲשֶׂיךָ׃ 9 כָּל־גּוֹיִם | אֲשֶׁר
עָשִׂיתָ יָבוֹאוּ וְיִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְפָנֶיךָ אֲדֹנָי וְיכַבְּדוּ לִשְׁמֶךָ׃
10 כִּי־גָדוֹל אַתָּה וְעֹשֵׂה נִפְלָאוֹת אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים
לְבַדֶּךָ׃ 11 הוֹרֵנִי יְהוָה | דַּרְכֶּךָ אֲהַלֵּךְ בַּאֲמִתֶּךָ
יַחֵד לְבָבִי לְיִרְאָה שְׁמֶךָ׃ 12 אוֹדְךָ | אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהַי

Ps. LXXXVI.

name for evermore. 13 For great is Thy mercy toward me: and Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest depths. 14 O God, the proud are risen against me, and the assemblies of violent men have sought after my soul; and have not set Thee before them. 15 But thou, O LORD, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth. 16 O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; give Thy strength unto Thy servant, and save the son of Thine handmaid. 17 Shew me a token for good; that they which hate me may see it, and be ashamed: because Thou, LORD, hast holpen me, and comforted me.

Note on Ps. LXXXVI.

This prayer of David helps and comforts all who read it in moments of trial and misery. David's absolute faith in the goodness and mercy of God, and his deep feeling of God's mercy towards himself, pervade every line of this Psalm.

They were the keynote of his religion, and led to his vivid consciousness of the spirit that is within us, and of its power of communion with God. The fourth and eleventh verses of the Psalm give noble utterance to this consciousness, and are prayers, not for mere bodily safety, but for the safeguarding of that spirit. "Rejoice the soul of Thy servant, for unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul."

"Teach me Thy way, O Lord; I will walk in Thy truth: unite my heart to fear Thy name" (i.e. to make the fear of Thee the one thought of my heart). To fear does not mean to fear in the cowardly sense,

Ps. LXXXVI.

בְּכָל־לְבָבִי וַאֲכַבְּדָה שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם׃ 13 כִּי חַסְדְּךָ גָּדוֹל
עָלָי וְהִצַּלְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִשְּׁאוֹל תַּחְתִּיָּה׃ 14 אֱלֹהִים ׀
זֵדִים קָמוּ עָלַי וַעֲדַת עָרִיצִים בִּקְשׁוּ נַפְשִׁי וְלֹא
שָׂמוּךָ לְנֶגְדָּם׃ 15 וְאַתָּה אֲדֹנָי אֵל־רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן אֶרֶךְ
אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת׃ 16 פְּנֵה אֵלַי וְחָנֵּנִי תְּנָה־
עֻזְּךָ לְעַבְדֶּךָ וְהוֹשִׁיעָה לְבֶן־אֲמָתֶךָ׃ 17 עֲשֵׂה־עִמִּי
אוֹת לְטוֹבָה וְיִרְאוּ שֹׂנְאַי וְיֵבֹשׁוּ כִּי־אַתָּה יְהוָה
עֲזַרְתַּנִי וְנִחַמְתָּנִי׃

Note on Ps. LXXXVI.

but to stand in awe of, to reverence, to honour; the fear that leads to love.

Even the bitter experience of the undeserved enmity of man brings before David's mind by contrast the thought of the never-failing goodness, mercy, and justice of God, and inspires the humble and trustful prayer of the last three verses.

In order to understand the full grandeur of the thought expressed in verses 8, 9, and 10, we must remember that in the days when David lived every little nation had its own set of deities, idols, and myths, and that none save Israel had the idea of the One God, sole Creator and Ruler of the world, and all that dwell therein, that grand thought and belief which in every service in our ritual we pray may become the universal faith of all mankind. "In that day shall the Lord be One, and His name One."

PSALM XC.

A Prayer of Moses, the Man of God.

LORD, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. 2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God. 3 Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men. 4 For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. 5 Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. 6 In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth. 7 For we are consumed by Thine anger, and by Thy wrath are we troubled. 8 Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance. 9 For all our days are passed away in Thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told. 10 The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. 11 Who knoweth the power of Thine anger? even according to Thy fear, so is Thy wrath. 12 So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. 13 Return, O LORD, how long? and let it repent Thee concerning Thy servants. 14 O satisfy us early with Thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. 15 Make us glad according to the days

XC. צ

תְּפִלָּה לְמֹשֶׁה אִישׁ־הָאֱלֹהִים

אֲדֹנָי מָעוֹן אַתָּה הָיִיתָ לָּנוּ בְּדֹר וָדֹר׃ 2 בְּטֶרֶם |
הָרִים יֻלָּדוּ וַתְּחוֹלֵל אֶרֶץ וְתֵבֵל וּמֵעוֹלָם עַד־עוֹלָם
אַתָּה אֵל׃ 3 תָּשֵׁב אֱנוֹשׁ עַד־דַּכָּא וַתֹּאמֶר שׁוּבוּ בְנֵי־
אָדָם׃ 4 כִּי אֶלֶף שָׁנִים בְּעֵינֶיךָ כְּיוֹם אֶתְמוֹל כִּי יַעֲבֹר
וְאַשְׁמוּרָה בַלָּיְלָה׃ 5 זְרַמְתָּם שֵׁנָה יִהְיוּ בַּבֹּקֶר כֶּחָצִיר
יַחֲלֹף׃ 6 בַּבֹּקֶר יָצִיץ וְחָלָף לָעֶרֶב יְמוֹלֵל וְיָבֵשׁ׃
7 כִּי־כָלִינוּ בְאַפֶּךָ וּבַחֲמָתְךָ נִבְהָלְנוּ׃ 8 שַׁתָּ עֲוֹנֹתֵינוּ
לְנֶגְדֶּךָ עֲלֻמֵּנוּ לִמְאוֹר פָּנֶיךָ׃ 9 כִּי כָל־יָמֵינוּ פָּנוּ
בְעֶבְרָתֶךָ כִּלִּינוּ שָׁנֵינוּ כְמוֹ־הֶגֶה׃ 10 יְמֵי־שְׁנוֹתֵינוּ |
בָּהֶם שִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה וְאִם בִּגְבוּרֹת | שְׁמֹנִים שָׁנָה
וְרָהְבָּם עָמָל וָאָוֶן כִּי גָז חִישׁ וַנָּעֻפָה׃ 11 מִי־יוֹדֵעַ
עֹז אַפֶּךָ וּכְיִרְאָתְךָ עֶבְרָתֶךָ׃ 12 לִמְנוֹת יָמֵינוּ כֵּן
הוֹדַע וְנָבִא לְבַב חָכְמָה׃ 13 שׁוּבָה יְהוָה עַד־מָתָי וְהִנָּחֵם
עַל־עֲבָדֶיךָ׃ 14 שַׂבְּעֵנוּ בַבֹּקֶר חַסְדֶּךָ וּנְרַנְּנָה וְנִשְׂמְחָה
בְּכָל־יָמֵינוּ׃ 15 שַׂמְּחֵנוּ כִּימוֹת עִנִּיתָנוּ שְׁנוֹת רָאִינוּ

Ps. XC. wherein Thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. 16 Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants, and Thy glory unto their children. 17 And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it.

Note on Ps. XC. In the Book of Psalms this is the only one described as a Psalm of Moses. There are two other songs of Moses in the Bible, the great song of thanksgiving when Israel was saved out of the hands of the Egyptians at the Red Sea, and Moses' song of farewell to the whole congregation of Israel before his death.

In the first verse of the 90th Psalm the word מָעוֹן means not merely "dwelling place," but "eversafe refuge," and that meaning seems to add to the force of the stately proclamation of the Eternity of God in the next verse.

In contrast to this, the third verse describes the uncertainty of the life of man, which may be ended at any moment by the will of God. "Thou turnest man to dust," and Thou sayest, "Return, ye children of men." The same thought is carried on through verses 4, 5, 6, in a series of poetical similes teeming with beautiful imagery.

(Verse 4.) Just as a night (though it seems so long to one who is keeping watch through its hours) when once it is passed becomes only a thought, like the remembrance of yesterday, so are a thousand years to the Eternal God.

(Verse 5.) The years pass by like a thing carried swiftly along by a torrent, and like the unreckoned hours of sleep. Their growth is like the quick and

Ps. XC.

רָעָה׃ 16 יֵרָאֶה אֶל־עֲבָדֶיךָ פָּעֳלֶךָ וַהֲדָרְךָ עַל־בְּנֵיהֶם׃
17 וִיהִי | נֹעַם אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ עָלֵינוּ וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ
כּוֹנְנָה עָלֵינוּ וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ כּוֹנְנֵהוּ׃

Note on Ps. XC.

yet invisible growth of the grass. This three-fold simile is expressed in Hebrew in a rapid phrase of six words, זַרְמָתָם שֵׁנָה יִהְיוּ בַּבֹּקֶר כֶּחָצִיר יַחֲלֹף The long English paraphrase, though beautiful, loses this suggestive rapidity.

Verse 6 ends the series with a word picture of the short span of plant life.

The next five verses deal with the relation of the Israelites to God. To understand them we must think of Moses as the great and inspired teacher; far ahead in mind, in knowledge, and in character of his people—degraded and demoralized as they were by generations of slavery and oppression. Moses mournfully foresaw that his brethren would many times revolt against the commands of God. The words of the lament show how well he understood the real meaning of the anger of God—not like human anger, which is a wrathful desire for revenge, but the Spirit of Divine Justice calling on man to obey the law that teaches him the difference between right and wrong, and to fear God lest in disregarding God's laws he should do evil.

In this sense, mourning the ignorant minds and rebellious spirit of the Israelites, Moses declares, "Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, our hidden sins in the light of Thy countenance. All our days are passed away in Thy wrath."

Note on Ps. XC.

Many centuries later the prophet Isaiah said, "Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day, or shall a nation be born at once?" Just as seeds must lie in the earth and be vivified by rain and kindled by sunlight before they can grow into plants, so human beings must be braced by individual effort and elevated by collective responsibility before they can grow into a nation. The same thought was in the mind of Moses as he meditated on the stupendous task that lay before his brethren of fitting themselves for their high mission by shaking off the lowering influences of a harsh slavery, and, rising to a full sense of the responsibility of each human soul to God. He realized how little can be accomplished towards that great end in one brief generation. "We spend our years as a tale that is told." Even if a life be a long one and a strong one, the work it can achieve is but small:—"For we are soon cut off, and we fly away. Even as Thy fear (the fear due to Thee), so is Thy wrath" (at human disobedience to Divine Law).[1]

Solomon, the wisest of all the kings of Israel, prayed for wisdom for himself, but Moses, the noblest and purest of all the heroes of Israel, prayed for wisdom for his people. "Give Thy servant an understanding heart, give me knowledge and wisdom," was the prayer of Solomon. "Teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom," are the impressive words of the prayer of Moses. The rapid and irrevocable flight of Time, the short duration of even the longest of human lives to

[1] Not only the rapidity but also the meaning of the terse Hebrew phrase וְכִיִרְאָתְךָ עֶבְרָתֶךָ ("even as Thy fear so is Thy wrath") are somewhat lost in the translation. The English word "fear" brings the thought of cowardice, but the Hebrew יִרְאָה has the added meaning of awe and reverence.

achieve any great work, the inevitable failures and shortcomings of us all, depicted in the previous verses, lend double force to the prayer, and bring vividly to our minds the duty of never wasting time, and of trying always to make the best use of our lives. Note on Ps. XC.

The next verse (13) recalls the other great prayer of Moses for the children of Israel when they stood on the verge of the Promised Land.[1]

Verses 14 and 15 help us to understand the religious duty of cheerfulness. If we are very happy in our childhood it puts a feeling in our hearts like unfading sunshine, and helps us always to be brave and cheerful, and to look on the best side of everything all through life. Whenever trouble and sorrow come to us we must always try to be brave and cheerful. We must seek happiness by trusting to the Infinite Wisdom and Infinite Goodness of God, and by feeling sure that He will have mercy upon us if we do our best to accept humbly and bear bravely whatever trials and troubles come to us.

Verse 16 and the first half of verse 17 echo and emphasize the same thought. If we trust in the mercy and have faith in the Justice of God, His work, and His glory, and His Blessedness will be manifest to us.[2]

The final prayer—"Establish Thou the work of

[1] "Pardon, I beseech Thee, the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of Thy mercy, and as Thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now." And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to thy word. (Numbers xiv. 19.)

[2] The Hebrew word נֹעַם does not exactly correspond to "beauty" as we use that word—in the sense of physical beauty. At the time the Psalms were translated into English, "beauty" meant something nearer to the Latin "beatitude," from which it is derived, and which means blessedness.

Note on Ps. XC. our hands, O Lord, establish Thou it," is echoed by us all when we set about every task in life that comes to our hands. The happiness of every human being is dependent on work and effort. "The wretch concentred all on self," vainly aspires to happiness. God has given us all that we have. What can we give Him in gratitude? The fruit of our work and the conduct of our lives. The primitive offerings of our forefathers when they sacrificed the choicest of the beasts they had reared in the homestead were typical of the eternal attitude of all mankind to the Creator. Our sacrifices, like the sacrifices of old,

PSALM XCI.

(*The messenger of God speaks.*) "HE that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

2 (*The soul of man speaks.*) "I will say of the LORD, 'He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust.'"

3 (*The messenger of God speaks.*) "Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. 4 He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. 5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; 6 Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. 7 A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but

must be without blemish; a pure life of honest, honourable effort to shed happiness and comfort on our fellow-creatures, and to do to the very best of our powers whatever work comes to our hand. "Both young men and maidens, old men and children, let them praise the name of the Lord," says one of the Psalmists. Let us all, young and old, praise God by the practical prayer of trying to make the best possible use of all the powers of body and mind God has given us to carry out our life's work. Then with hopeful hearts we can pray in the words of Moses, "O Lord, prosper Thou it." Note on Ps. XC.

XCI. צא

יֹשֵׁב בְּסֵתֶר עֶלְיוֹן בְּצֵל שַׁדַּי יִתְלוֹנָן׃ 2 אֹמַר
לַיהוָה מַחְסִי וּמְצוּדָתִי אֱלֹהַי אֶבְטַח־בּוֹ׃ 3 כִּי הוּא
יַצִּילְךָ מִפַּח יָקוּשׁ מִדֶּבֶר הַוּוֹת׃ 4 בְּאֶבְרָתוֹ | יָסֶךְ
לָךְ וְתַחַת־כְּנָפָיו תֶּחְסֶה צִנָּה וְסֹחֵרָה אֲמִתּוֹ׃ 5 לֹא
תִירָא מִפַּחַד לָיְלָה מֵחֵץ יָעוּף יוֹמָם׃ 6 מִדֶּבֶר בָּאֹפֶל
יַהֲלֹךְ מִקֶּטֶב יָשׁוּד צָהֳרָיִם׃ 7 יִפֹּל מִצִּדְּךָ | אֶלֶף
וּרְבָבָה מִימִינֶךָ אֵלֶיךָ לֹא יִגָּשׁ׃ 8 רַק בְּעֵינֶיךָ תַבִּיט
וְשִׁלֻּמַת רְשָׁעִים תִּרְאֶה׃ 9 כִּי־אַתָּה יְהוָה מַחְסִי עֶלְיוֹן

Ps. XCI. it shall not come nigh thee. 8 Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked."

9 (*The soul of man speaks.*) "For Thou, O God, art my Refuge."

(*The messenger of God speaks.*) "Thou hast put thy trust in the Most High. 10 There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. 11 For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. 12 They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. 13 Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet." 14 Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known My name. 15 He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. 16 With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him My salvation.

Note on Ps. XCI. The ninety-first Psalm is in the form of an imaginary dialogue between the Messenger of God and the soul of man.

The voice of the Messenger of God utters the first verse, the leading thought of the whole Psalm.

That thought is not expressed directly, but is conveyed by poetic imagery which is difficult to follow in the translation. But if we realize the exact meaning of the words in the original Hebrew, it helps to bring the full sense of the verse before us.

Thus יֹשֵׁב—"he that dwelleth"—means he who

Ps. XCI.

שַׂמְתָּ מְעוֹנֶךָ׃ 10 לֹא־תְאֻנֶּה אֵלֶיךָ רָעָה וְנֶגַע לֹא־
יִקְרַב בְּאָהֳלֶךָ׃ 11 כִּי מַלְאָכָיו יְצַוֶּה־לָּךְ לִשְׁמָרְךָ
בְּכָל־דְּרָכֶיךָ׃ 12 עַל־כַּפַּיִם יִשָּׂאוּנְךָ פֶּן־תִּגֹּף בָּאֶבֶן
רַגְלֶךָ׃ 13 עַל־שַׁחַל וָפֶתֶן תִּדְרֹךְ תִּרְמֹס כְּפִיר
וְתַנִּין׃ 14 כִּי בִי חָשַׁק וַאֲפַלְּטֵהוּ אֲשַׂגְּבֵהוּ כִּי־יָדַע
שְׁמִי׃ 15 יִקְרָאֵנִי ׀ וְאֶעֱנֵהוּ עִמּוֹ־אָנֹכִי בְצָרָה אֲחַלְּצֵהוּ
וַאֲכַבְּדֵהוּ׃ 16 אֹרֶךְ יָמִים אַשְׂבִּיעֵהוּ וְאַרְאֵהוּ בִּישׁוּעָתִי׃

Note on Ps. XCI.

lives always, who spends his whole life. סֵתֶר, "secret place," also means "veil," or "shelter." צֵל, "shadow," has the added meaning of protection from danger, because, in the country where this Psalm was composed, the great heat of the sun is a danger from which shadow is a protection. יִתְלוֹנָן, "he shall abide," means especially he shall lodge, and hence, he shall pass the night.

Now we can see the full meaning of the verse: he who dwells under the shelter of the Most High (i.e. he who spends his life with the thought of God, and therefore of goodness always before him) will be

Note on Ps. XCI. under the protection of the Almighty in the night (i.e. in the time of darkness and danger).

That is the thought pictured in many different forms throughout the whole Psalm. The answering soul of man speaks in the second verse, "I will say of the Lord, He is my Refuge and my Fortress. In Him will I trust," and again in the first half of the ninth verse, "For Thou, O God, art my Refuge." The messenger of God rejoins, "Thou hast put thy trust in the Most High. There shall no evil befall thee," and continues the series of comforting pictures of God's protection, till the three last verses in which the Psalmist seems to hear the very voice of God himself uttering words which are like an echo of the Divine promise of the second commandment:—"Shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments."

PSALM XCII.

A Psalm and Song for the Sabbath Day.

IT is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto Thy name, O most High: 2 To show forth Thy lovingkindness in the morning, and Thy faithfulness every night, 3 Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound. 4 For Thou, LORD, hast made me glad through Thy work: I will triumph in the works of Thy hands. 5 O LORD, how great are Thy works! and Thy thoughts are very deep. 6 A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this. 7 When the wicked spring as the

Note on Ps. XCI.

The 91st Psalm always seems to me to have been written by a herdsman or a hunter, whose poetic imagery pictures his daily surroundings. The awe of the vast solitude in the open, the lurking fever in the suddenly chilled air at dusk, the overwhelming sunstroke at mid-day, the stony mountain track, the lion, the adder, the venomous serpent, these are the dangers he is familiar with, and the thought of shelter and protection brings before his mind's eye the picture of a little bird nestling safely under its mother's wing.

Such understanding of nature *is* a form of prayer and praise to the Creator of the world and its wonders.

מַלְאָכָיו, translated, "His angels," in the eleventh verse, really means "His Messengers." The wonders of nature are indeed the messengers of God bringing us the knowledge of His power, His wisdom, His lovingkindness, and His mercy.

XCII. צב

מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת׃

טוֹב לְהֹדוֹת לַיהוָה וּלְזַמֵּר לְשִׁמְךָ עֶלְיוֹן׃ 2 לְהַגִּיד
בַּבֹּקֶר חַסְדֶּךָ וֶאֱמוּנָתְךָ בַּלֵּילוֹת׃ 3 עֲלֵי־עָשׂוֹר וַעֲלֵי־
נָבֶל עֲלֵי הִגָּיוֹן בְּכִנּוֹר׃ 4 כִּי שִׂמַּחְתַּנִי יְהוָה בְּפָעֳלֶךָ
בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יָדֶיךָ אֲרַנֵּן׃ 5 מַה־גָּדְלוּ מַעֲשֶׂיךָ יְהוָה מְאֹד
עָמְקוּ מַחְשְׁבֹתֶיךָ׃ 6 אִישׁ־בַּעַר לֹא יֵדָע וּכְסִיל לֹא־
יָבִין אֶת זֹאת׃ 7 בִּפְרֹחַ רְשָׁעִים | כְּמוֹ־עֵשֶׂב וַיָּצִיצוּ

Ps. XCII. grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever: 8 But Thou, LORD, art most high for evermore. 9 For, lo, Thine enemies, O LORD, for, lo, Thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered. 10 But my horn shalt Thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil. 11 Mine eye also shall discern mine enemies, and mine ears shall hear when evil-doers rise up against me. 12 The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. 13 Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. 14 They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be full of sap and flourishing; 15 To shew that the LORD is upright: He is my Rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

Note on Ps. XCII. The 92nd Psalm is a meditation on God's never-ceasing care of man. It proclaims and gives thanks for "Thy lovingkindness in the morning, and Thy faithfulness every night."

Such thanks are peculiarly appropriate to the Sabbath day—when we are enjoying the rest enjoined by the beneficent law that every one should be allowed one day of rest after six days of labour. The full blessing of this ordinance is realised by those who have to toil hard on the six days of each week, all the year and every year, to earn their daily bread.

In olden days, servants and workmen were slaves, and belonged to their masters and mistresses like horses or dogs may belong to us now. They were never able to leave their masters, and were completely

Ps. XCII.

כָּל־פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן לְהִשָּׁמְדָם עֲדֵי־עַד׃ 8 וְאַתָּה מָרוֹם
לְעֹלָם יְהוָה׃ 9 כִּי הִנֵּה אֹיְבֶיךָ | יְהוָה כִּי־הִנֵּה
אֹיְבֶיךָ יֹאבֵדוּ יִתְפָּרְדוּ כָּל־פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן׃ 10 וַתָּרֶם
כִּרְאֵים קַרְנִי בַּלֹּתִי בְּשֶׁמֶן רַעֲנָן׃ 11 וַתַּבֵּט עֵינִי
בְּשׁוּרָי בַּקָּמִים עָלַי מְרֵעִים תִּשְׁמַעְנָה אָזְנָי׃ 12 צַדִּיק
כַּתָּמָר יִפְרָח כְּאֶרֶז בַּלְּבָנוֹן יִשְׂגֶּה׃ 13 שְׁתוּלִים בְּבֵית
יְהוָה בְּחַצְרוֹת אֱלֹהֵינוּ יַפְרִיחוּ׃ 14 עוֹד יְנוּבוּן בְּשֵׂיבָה
דְּשֵׁנִים וְרַעֲנַנִּים יִהְיוּ׃ 15 לְהַגִּיד כִּי־יָשָׁר יְהוָה צוּרִי
וְלֹא־עַוְלָתָה בּוֹ׃

Note on Ps. XCII.

in their power. What a blessing for these poor slaves that their masters were compelled by the law of the Sabbath to allow them to rest on the seventh day.

The Psalmist laments how few of us ever realize the vastness of the power and wisdom of God, and His Infinite goodness! Because of the Goodness of God, goodness will ever conquer badness. That thought is echoed and re-echoed throughout the Psalm in poetic imagery drawn from Nature, and in the fervid expression of the Psalmist's confidence that whatever danger may assail him, Divine protection will be accorded to him. The last verse emphasizes the thought that the manifestation of the power of Divine Goodness proclaims that God is upright, and that there is no unrighteousness in Him.

PSALM XCIII.

THE LORD reigneth, He is clothed with majesty; the LORD is clothed with strength, wherewith He hath girded Himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved. 2 Thy throne is established of old: Thou art from everlasting. 3 The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves. 4 Mightier than the voices of many waters, yea than the mighty waves of the sea, is the Lord on high. 5 Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh Thine house, O LORD, for ever.

Note on Ps. XCIII. This is a song of wonder at the marvels which surround us; the earth, the sky, the sea with its mighty power. But the Psalmist feels that the Lord God Who created them is mightier than all,

PSALM XCIV.

O LORD God, of vengeance, O God, of vengeance, shine forth, shew Thyself. 2 Lift up Thyself, Thou Judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud. 3 LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph? 4 How long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves? 5 They break in pieces Thy people, O LORD, and afflict Thine heritage. 6 They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless. 7 Yet they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall

XCIII. צג

יְהוָה מָלָךְ גֵּאוּת לָבֵשׁ לָבֵשׁ יְהוָה עֹז הִתְאַזָּר
אַף־תִּכּוֹן תֵּבֵל בַּל־תִּמּוֹט: 2 נָכוֹן כִּסְאֲךָ מֵאָז מֵעוֹלָם
אָתָּה: 3 נָשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת | יְהוָה נָשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת קוֹלָם
יִשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת דָּכְיָם: 4 מִקֹּלוֹת | מַיִם רַבִּים אַדִּירִים
מִשְׁבְּרֵי־יָם אַדִּיר בַּמָּרוֹם יְהוָה: 5 עֵדֹתֶיךָ | נֶאֶמְנוּ
מְאֹד לְבֵיתְךָ נַאֲוָה־קֹדֶשׁ יְהוָה לְאֹרֶךְ יָמִים:

and that the greatness of God is shewn to us by the might and majesty of His works, which, like His goodness, are everlasting.

Note on Ps. XCIII.

XCIV. צד

אֵל־נְקָמוֹת יְהוָה אֵל נְקָמוֹת הוֹפִיעַ: 2 הִנָּשֵׂא
שֹׁפֵט הָאָרֶץ הָשֵׁב גְּמוּל עַל־גֵּאִים: 3 עַד־מָתַי
רְשָׁעִים | יְהוָה עַד־מָתַי רְשָׁעִים יַעֲלֹזוּ: 4 יַבִּיעוּ
יְדַבְּרוּ עָתָק יִתְאַמְּרוּ כָּל־פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן: 5 עַמְּךָ יְהוָה
יְדַכְּאוּ וְנַחֲלָתְךָ יְעַנּוּ: 6 אַלְמָנָה וְגֵר יַהֲרֹגוּ וְיתוֹמִים
יְרַצֵּחוּ: 7 וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא יִרְאֶה־יָהּ וְלֹא־יָבִין אֱלֹהֵי

Ps. XCIV. the God of Jacob regard it. 8 Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise? 9 He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see? 10 He that chasteneth the nations, shall not He correct, that teacheth man knowledge? 11 The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity. 12 Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of Thy law; 13 That Thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked. 14 For the LORD will not cast off His people, neither will He forsake His inheritance. 15 But judgment shall return unto righteousness: and all the upright in heart shall follow it. 16 Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity? 17 Unless the LORD had been my help, my soul had soon dwelt in silence. 18 When I said, My foot slippeth; Thy mercy, O LORD, held me up. 19 In the multitude of my thoughts within me Thy comforts delight my soul. 20 Shall the throne of iniquity, which frameth mischief by a law, have fellowship with Thee? 21 They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood. 22 But the LORD is my defence; and my God is the rock of my refuge. 23 And He shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; yea, the LORD our God shall cut them off.

יַעֲקֹב׃ 8 בִּינוּ בֹעֲרִים בָּעָם וּכְסִילִים מָתַי תַּשְׂכִּילוּ׃
9 הֲנֹטַע אֹזֶן הֲלֹא יִשְׁמָע אִם־יֹצֵר עַיִן הֲלֹא יַבִּיט׃
10 הַיֹּסֵר גּוֹיִם הֲלֹא יוֹכִיחַ הַמְלַמֵּד אָדָם דָּעַת׃
11 יְהוָה יֹדֵעַ מַחְשְׁבוֹת אָדָם כִּי הֵמָּה הָבֶל׃
12 אַשְׁרֵי הַגֶּבֶר אֲשֶׁר־תְּיַסְּרֶנּוּ יָהּ וּמִתּוֹרָתְךָ תְלַמְּדֶנּוּ׃
13 לְהַשְׁקִיט לוֹ מִימֵי רָע עַד יִכָּרֶה לָרָשָׁע שָׁחַת׃
14 כִּי | לֹא יִטֹּשׁ יְהוָה עַמּוֹ וְנַחֲלָתוֹ לֹא יַעֲזֹב׃
15 כִּי־עַד־צֶדֶק יָשׁוּב מִשְׁפָּט וְאַחֲרָיו כָּל־יִשְׁרֵי־לֵב׃
16 מִי־יָקוּם לִי עִם־מְרֵעִים מִי־יִתְיַצֵּב לִי עִם־פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן׃
17 לוּלֵי יְהוָה עֶזְרָתָה לִּי כִּמְעַט | שָׁכְנָה דוּמָה
נַפְשִׁי׃ 18 אִם־אָמַרְתִּי מָטָה רַגְלִי חַסְדְּךָ יְהוָה
יִסְעָדֵנִי׃ 19 בְּרֹב שַׂרְעַפַּי בְּקִרְבִּי תַּנְחוּמֶיךָ יְשַׁעֲשְׁעוּ
נַפְשִׁי׃ 20 הֲיִחָבְרְךָ כִּסֵּא הַוּוֹת יֹצֵר עָמָל עָלֵי־חֹק׃
21 יָגוֹדּוּ עַל־נֶפֶשׁ צַדִּיק וְדָם נָקִי יַרְשִׁיעוּ׃ 22 וַיְהִי
יְהוָה לִי לְמִשְׂגָּב וֵאלֹהַי לְצוּר מַחְסִי׃ 23 וַיָּשֶׁב
עֲלֵיהֶם | אֶת־אוֹנָם וּבְרָעָתָם יַצְמִיתֵם יַצְמִיתֵם יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵינוּ׃

Note on Ps. XCIV.

In the opening verses the Psalmist, moved by the terrible calamities that had befallen Israel, utters a vehement and impetuous prayer to God for the speedy punishment of the oppressors of Israel.

The meaning of the epithet "God of vengeance," is rather God of retribution and of Justice, for the very recital of the wicked deeds of wanton cruelty convinces the Psalmist that God is ever just, and that all suffering will be remembered by the Divine Justice and Mercy, and with this thought in his mind he calls on both persecutors and persecuted to understand this truth. "He that planteth the ear, shall He not hear? He that formeth the eye, shall He not see? Shall not He correct Who chasteneth the people and Who teacheth man wisdom?

PSALM XCV.

O COME, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation. 2 Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms. 3 For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. 4 In His hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is His also. 5 The sea is His, and He made it: and His hands formed the dry land. 6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our Maker. 7 For He is our God; and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand. To-day if ye will hear His voice, 8 Harden not your heart, as

Happy is the man whom God chasteneth, whom Thou teachest from Thy law." Note on Ps. XCIV.

The rest of the Psalm is a series of poetic pictures of the strength of soul and the serene courage that come to us if we have absolute faith in the Goodness of God, and absolute trust that by reason of His Goodness good shall triumph over evil and right over wrong.

When trouble overtakes us, or doubts haunt us, let us call to mind the heartening words of the nineteenth verse, "In the multitude of my thoughts within me, Thy comforts delight my soul," which are like an answering echo to these inspiriting words of David, "Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord."

XCV. צה

לְכוּ נְרַנְּנָה לַיהוָה נָרִיעָה לְצוּר יִשְׁעֵנוּ׃ 2 נְקַדְּמָה
פָנָיו בְּתוֹדָה בִּזְמִרוֹת נָרִיעַ לוֹ׃ 3 כִּי אֵל גָּדוֹל
יְהוָה וּמֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל עַל־כָּל־אֱלֹהִים׃ 4 אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדוֹ
מְחְקְרֵי־אָרֶץ וְתוֹעֲפוֹת הָרִים לוֹ׃ 5 אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ הַיָּם
וְהוּא עָשָׂהוּ וְיַבֶּשֶׁת יָדָיו יָצָרוּ׃ 6 בֹּאוּ נִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה
וְנִכְרָעָה נִבְרְכָה לִפְנֵי־יְהוָה עֹשֵׂנוּ׃ 7 כִּי הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וַאֲנַחְנוּ עַם מַרְעִיתוֹ וְצֹאן יָדוֹ הַיּוֹם אִם־בְּקֹלוֹ תִשְׁמָעוּ׃
8 אַל־תַּקְשׁוּ לְבַבְכֶם כִּמְרִיבָה כְּיוֹם מַסָּה בַּמִּדְבָּר׃

Ps. XCV. at Meribah, and as in the day of Massah in the wilderness*: 9 When your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My work. 10 Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known My ways: 11 Unto whom I sware in My wrath that they should not enter into My rest.

Note on Ps. XCV. The 95th Psalm is the first of six joyous songs of praise and thanks to the Almighty Creator of the whole world. These songs are all full of word-pictures of the wonder and grandeur of God's works, and of exhortations to Israel, His chosen messengers, to be ever faithful to their great trust.

The Psalmist pictures God Himself mourning when one whole generation of Israel faltered in their faith, and so became unworthy to enter that Holy Land which was destined to be the home whence religious truth was to be carried abroad to all the nations of the earth, through the chosen messengers of God.

PSALM XCVI.

O SING unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth. 2 Sing unto the LORD, bless His name; show forth His salvation from day to day. 3 Declare His glory among the heathen, His wonders among all people. 4 For the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised: He is to be feared above all gods. 5 For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens.

* Exodus, ch. 17, v. 7.

Ps. XCV.

9 אֲשֶׁר נִסּוּנִי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם בְּחָנוּנִי גַּם־רָאוּ פָּעָלִי׃
10 אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה ׀ אָקוּט בְּדוֹר וָאֹמַר עַם תֹּעֵי
לֵבָב הֵם וְהֵם לֹא־יָדְעוּ דְרָכָי׃ 11 אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי
בְאַפִּי אִם־יְבֹאֻן אֶל־מְנוּחָתִי׃

Note on Ps. XCV.

To understand the greatness of this message, we must remember that in those days most people believed that there were a number of gods, and that all the marvels of creation were ruled over each by its own god. Thus they thought there was a sun-god, a moon-god, an earth-goddess, a sea-god, a god of the winds, and so on.

But Israel is the Messenger of God to tell and to teach to all mankind that there is only one God, the Creator of all, and that to Him and to Him alone all human beings are directly responsible for every act of their lives.

XCVI. צו

שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חָדָשׁ שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ׃
2 שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה בָּרְכוּ שְׁמוֹ בַּשְּׂרוּ מִיּוֹם־לְיוֹם יְשׁוּעָתוֹ׃
3 סַפְּרוּ בַגּוֹיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ בְּכָל־הָעַמִּים נִפְלְאוֹתָיו׃ 4 כִּי
גָדוֹל יְהוָה וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד נוֹרָא הוּא עַל־כָּל־אֱלֹהִים׃
5 כִּי ׀ כָּל־אֱלֹהֵי הָעַמִּים אֱלִילִים וַיהוָה שָׁמַיִם עָשָׂה׃

Ps. XCVI. 6 Honour and majesty are before Him: strength and beauty are in His sanctuary. 7 Give unto the LORD, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength. 8 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto His name: bring an offering, and come into His courts. 9 O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: tremble before Him, all the earth. 10 Say among the heathen that the LORD reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: He shall judge the people righteously. 11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. 12 Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy. 13 Before the LORD: for He cometh, for He cometh to judge the earth: He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth.

Note on Ps. XCVI. The 96th Psalm, like the 95th, is a song of praise and thanks to God, and a trumpet call to the Jews to proclaim their great message to the whole world.

When we see the sun shining, the trees waving in the wind, and the sea tossing its great waves; when grass springs up in the fields, and the wild flowers blossom, it is good to remember that all this is the work of the One God; it is the whole earth singing His praise to us and to all mankind if they will but hear it; for God made it all, and as surely

Ps. XCVI.

6 הוֹד־וְהָדָר לְפָנָיו עֹז וְתִפְאֶרֶת בְּמִקְדָּשׁוֹ׃ 7 הָבוּ
לַיהוָה מִשְׁפְּחוֹת עַמִּים הָבוּ לַיהוָה כָּבוֹד וָעֹז׃
8 הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ שְׂאוּ־מִנְחָה וּבֹאוּ לְחַצְרוֹתָיו׃
9 הִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לַיהוָה בְּהַדְרַת־קֹדֶשׁ חִילוּ מִפָּנָיו כָּל־הָאָרֶץ׃
10 אִמְרוּ בַגּוֹיִם | יְהוָה מָלָךְ אַף־תִּכּוֹן תֵּבֵל בַּל־תִּמּוֹט
יָדִין עַמִּים בְּמֵישָׁרִים׃ 11 יִשְׂמְחוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְתָגֵל
הָאָרֶץ יִרְעַם הַיָּם וּמְלֹאוֹ׃ 12 יַעֲלֹז שָׂדַי וְכָל אֲשֶׁר־
בּוֹ אָז יְרַנְּנוּ כָּל־עֲצֵי־יָעַר׃ 13 לִפְנֵי יְהוָה | כִּי בָא
כִּי־בָא לִשְׁפֹּט הָאָרֶץ יִשְׁפֹּט־תֵּבֵל בְּצֶדֶק וְעַמִּים
בֶּאֱמוּנָתוֹ

Note on Ps. XCVI.

as the world exists by God's wisdom, so surely is all mankind judged rightly by God's righteousness.

Although not described in the Bible as a Psalm of David, this is, in fact, part of the song of thanksgiving composed by him for Asaph,[1] the chief of the Levites, appointed to minister daily before the Ark of the Lord, when David had brought the Ark to Jerusalem (I. Chron. xvi.). Another portion of the same song is almost identical with Psalm cv., which is also not called a "Psalm of David."

[1] See notes on Psalm lxxxi.

PSALM XCVII.

THE LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad. 2 Clouds and darkness are round about Him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne. 3 A fire goeth before Him, and flameth around his enemies. 4 His lightnings lightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled. 5 The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the LORD of the whole earth. 6 The heavens declare His righteousness, and all the peoples see His glory. 7 Ashamed be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols; worship Him, all ye gods. 8 Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of Thy judgments, O LORD. 9 For Thou, LORD, art high above all the earth: Thou art exalted far above all gods. 10 Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of His saints; He delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked. 11 Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. 12 Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness.

Note on Ps. XCVII. This is an ode to the goodness and greatness of God. The might and marvel of His works are brought vividly before our mind by graphic word-pictures of the wonders He has made.

XCVII. צז

יְהוָה מָלָךְ תָּגֵל הָאָרֶץ יִשְׂמְחוּ אִיִּים רַבִּים׃
2 עָנָן וַעֲרָפֶל סְבִיבָיו צֶדֶק וּמִשְׁפָּט מְכוֹן כִּסְאוֹ׃
3 אֵשׁ לְפָנָיו תֵּלֵךְ וּתְלַהֵט סָבִיב צָרָיו׃ 4 הֵאִירוּ
בְרָקָיו תֵּבֵל רָאֲתָה וַתָּחֶל הָאָרֶץ׃ 5 הָרִים כַּדּוֹנַג
נָמַסּוּ מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה מִלִּפְנֵי אֲדוֹן כָּל־הָאָרֶץ׃ 6 הִגִּידוּ
הַשָּׁמַיִם צִדְקוֹ וְרָאוּ כָל־הָעַמִּים כְּבוֹדוֹ׃ 7 יֵבֹשׁוּ |
כָּל־עֹבְדֵי פֶסֶל הַמִּתְהַלְלִים בָּאֱלִילִים הִשְׁתַּחֲווּ־לוֹ
כָּל־אֱלֹהִים׃ 8 שָׁמְעָה וַתִּשְׂמַח | צִיּוֹן וַתָּגֵלְנָה בְּנוֹת
יְהוּדָה לְמַעַן מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ יְהוָה׃ 9 כִּי־אַתָּה | יְהוָה עֶלְיוֹן
עַל־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ מְאֹד נַעֲלֵיתָ עַל־כָּל־אֱלֹהִים׃ 10 אֹהֲבֵי
יְהוָה שִׂנְאוּ רָע שֹׁמֵר נַפְשׁוֹת חֲסִידָיו מִיַּד רְשָׁעִים
יַצִּילֵם׃ 11 אוֹר זָרֻעַ לַצַּדִּיק וּלְיִשְׁרֵי־לֵב שִׂמְחָה׃
12 שִׂמְחוּ צַדִּיקִים בַּיהוָה וְהוֹדוּ לְזֵכֶר קָדְשׁוֹ׃

Note on Ps. XCVII.

Then follows an invocation to all the world, even to the idols, to worship the Almighty Creator.

The last three verses are a sort of response inspired by the stirring phrase, "Ye that love the

Note on Ps. XCVII.

Lord hate evil." God is ever and infinitely good; with the love of God in our hearts we love goodness and hate evil. "Light is sown for the righteous." Just as the seeds sown in the furrows

PSALM XCVIII.

A Psalm.

O SING unto the LORD a new song; for He hath done marvellous things: His right hand, and His holy arm, hath gotten Him the victory. 2 The LORD hath made known His salvation: His righteousness hath He openly shewed in the sight of the nations. 3 He hath remembered His mercy and His truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. 4 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. 5 Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp and the voice of a psalm. 6 With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King. 7 Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. 8 Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together. 9 Before the LORD; for He cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall He judge the world, and the people with equity.

spring out of the ground, so "light" appears along the path of life of those who always try to do what they know to be right, and "gladness," the cheerfulness of a serene conscience, is in their hearts.

Note on Ps. XCVII

XCVIII. צח

מִזְמוֹר

שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה | שִׁיר חָדָשׁ כִּי־נִפְלָאוֹת עָשָׂה
הוֹשִׁיעָה־לּוֹ יְמִינוֹ וּזְרוֹעַ קָדְשׁוֹ: 2 הוֹדִיעַ יְהוָה יְשׁוּעָתוֹ
לְעֵינֵי הַגּוֹיִם גִּלָּה צִדְקָתוֹ: 3 זָכַר חַסְדּוֹ | וֶאֱמוּנָתוֹ
לְבֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל רָאוּ כָל־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ אֵת יְשׁוּעַת אֱלֹהֵינוּ:
4 הָרִיעוּ לַיהוָה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ פִּצְחוּ וְרַנְּנוּ וְזַמֵּרוּ:
5 זַמְּרוּ לַיהוָה בְּכִנּוֹר בְּכִנּוֹר וְקוֹל זִמְרָה: 6 בַּחֲצֹצְרוֹת
וְקוֹל שׁוֹפָר הָרִיעוּ לִפְנֵי | הַמֶּלֶךְ יְהוָה: 7 יִרְעַם הַיָּם
וּמְלֹאוֹ תֵּבֵל וְיֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ 8 נְהָרוֹת יִמְחֲאוּ־כָף יַחַד
הָרִים יְרַנֵּנוּ: 9 לִפְנֵי־יְהוָה כִּי־בָא לִשְׁפֹּט הָאָרֶץ
יִשְׁפֹּט־תֵּבֵל בְּצֶדֶק וְעַמִּים בְּמֵישָׁרִים:

Note on Ps. XCVIII. This Psalm was written in a moment of great gladness, when the people of Israel had been saved from some terrible danger. It exactly expresses what we all feel when we have been very unhappy and are very happy again. We feel so grateful to God that we want the whole world to join with us in praise and thanks for His everlasting goodness and mercy.

You must have noticed the Psalmists often say "sing and play music," on the harps and psaltery and trumpets, to express praise and thanksgiving to God.

In olden times poets did not *write* their poems, but just *sang* their thoughts as they came into their minds; the songs were passed on from mouth to mouth, till at last, perhaps hundreds of years later, they were written down, and, later still, printed. In the same way the Psalmists used to

PSALM XCIX.

THE LORD reigneth; let the peoples tremble. He abideth amid the cherubim; let the earth quake. 2 The LORD is great in Zion; and He is high above all the peoples.

3 Let them praise Thy great and awful Name; holy is He.

4 The King's strength also loveth judgment; Thou hast established equity, Thou hast executed judgment and righteousness in Jacob.

5 Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at His footstool; holy is He.

6 Moses and Aaron among His priests, and Samuel among them that called on His name: they

pour out their feelings to God in songs of prayer, accompanying themselves with a little harp, which they carried in one hand, and played with the other. Note on Ps. XCVIII.

Long after Bible times there were still such musical poet-singers; they were called minstrels; and it became the custom for every king to have a minstrel at his court to celebrate the great events of his reign by singing songs about them. Sir Walter Scott wrote a poem called the "Lay of the Last Minstrel" about these old singing poets. When you read it, think of David, the greatest of all minstrels, whose Psalms we still sing, and who played so skilfully on the harp that (as we are told in the Bible), when King Saul was ill and sad, David played to him, and King Saul was cured and cheered by his sweet music.

XCIX. צט

יְהוָה מָלָךְ יִרְגְּזוּ עַמִּים יֹשֵׁב כְּרוּבִים תָּנוּט הָאָרֶץ׃
2 יְהוָה בְּצִיּוֹן גָּדוֹל וְרָם הוּא עַל־כָּל־הָעַמִּים׃ 3 יוֹדוּ
שִׁמְךָ גָּדוֹל וְנוֹרָא קָדוֹשׁ הוּא׃ 4 וְעֹז מֶלֶךְ מִשְׁפָּט
אָהֵב אַתָּה כּוֹנַנְתָּ מֵישָׁרִים מִשְׁפָּט וּצְדָקָה בְּיַעֲקֹב |
אַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ׃ 5 רוֹמְמוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ
לַהֲדֹם רַגְלָיו קָדוֹשׁ הוּא׃ 6 מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן | בְּכֹהֲנָיו
וּשְׁמוּאֵל בְּקֹרְאֵי שְׁמוֹ קֹרְאִים* אֶל יְהוָה וְהוּא יַעֲנֵם׃

Ps. XCIX. called upon the LORD and He answered them. 7 He spake unto them in the pillar of cloud: they kept His testimonies, and the statute He gave unto them. 8 Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: Thou wast a forgiving God to them, and an avenging God on their evil deeds.

9 Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at His holy hill; for the Lord our God is holy.

Note on Ps. XCIX. Psalm xcix. is an ode to the might of God, and in praise of His righteousness and His mercy.

Verse 4 suggests the thought that the possession of power often tempts mankind to an unjust use of it. But the Divine King "loveth judgment and hath established equity" (that is justice and fairness).

Verse 8. "Thou didst answer them, O Lord our God! Thou wast a forgiving God to them, and an avenging God on their evil deeds."

This verse sums up the Jewish conception of Divine justice and Divine mercy, and shows us the Psalmists' meaning when they speak of the anger or the vengeance of God. It is not a hot impulse of the moment, nor a wrathful desire for revenge like human anger, but it is the spirit of Divine Justice which permeates the world.

God has given man the knowledge to discern between right and wrong, and power to make the effort to do right, and to restrain himself from doing wrong. If he fails to use this power, he sins against the spirit of Divine Justice. By the great unchanging laws of God, which govern the world, sin brings its own punishment, yet—by a merciful

Ps. XCIX.

7 בְּעַמּוּד עָנָן יְדַבֶּר אֲלֵיהֶם שָׁמְרוּ עֵדֹתָיו וְחֹק נָתַן־
לָמוֹ 8 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אַתָּה עֲנִיתָם אֵל נֹשֵׂא הָיִיתָ
לָהֶם וְנֹקֵם עַל־עֲלִילוֹתָם: 9 רוֹמְמוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְהַר קָדְשׁוֹ כִּי־קָדוֹשׁ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ:

Note on Ps. XCIX.

ordinance that is also part of the Divine eternal laws—true repentance earns the forgiveness of God.

For Older Children.—The Psalmist's thought illustrates the practical bent of Jewish philosophy, as contrasted with the Mystical and Mythological schools of thought. Belief in the Unity and Universality of God led naturally to the conception of that one First Cause ruling over the universe by eternal laws of infinite wisdom and perfection, and thus making cause and effect produce a harmonious and inevitable whole.

The Mythologists imagined the existence of a group of immortal gods and goddesses, who were endued with more than human powers, but with all human moral frailties, and who ruled and made tools of human kind—a terrible turmoil of autocratic rulers!

The Mystical school borrowed both from the Jews and from the Mythologists, and evolved a religion comprising patron saints (who, in the popular mind, more or less took the place of the tutelary deities of mythology), and also a superior power intimately related to the Godhead above, and to the saints,

Note on Ps. XCIX

and the ordinary human beings below.[1] The Mystical school also evolved a system of rewards and punishments for mankind, not as a result of the natural workings of the eternal Divine laws, but as the result of the administration of a code of laws drawn up by priests in whom it pre-supposes a detailed knowledge of the Divine punishments for every form and every degree of human fallibility and sin.

The Reformation swept away the tutelary saints, but preserved the intermediate deity. Professor Berner, a Protestant, and a prominent German jurist, said (in a lecture on the "future of Israel,"

PSALM C.

A Psalm of Praise.

MAKE a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. 2 Serve the LORD with gladness: come before His presence with singing. 3 Know ye that the LORD He is God: He hath made us, and we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. 4 Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name. 5 For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His faithfulness endureth to all generations.

[1] In olden times there arose a world-wide custom of dedicating a child at birth to the special service and protection of some higher power. The Bible tells us how the infant Samuel was dedicated by his mother to the service of God, and the many Hebrew names beginning or ending with "el" (the Hebrew word meaning God) indicate the practice of dedicating Israelitish children—the descendants of the "Warrior of God" (Israel)—to the service of God. The Mythologists dedicated

delivered before the German Society of Protestants): "Down to the present time the Jews have been the pioneers of monotheism . . . . . Judaism in its religious separateness has done humanity the greatest service. The religion of the future . . . from which all dogmatic padding will have been removed . . . will be refined into pure monotheism by the renewed intervention of Judaism."* Is not this dictum the very echo of the closing prayer of every service in the Jewish Ritual? "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall the Lord be one, and His Name one." Note on Ps. XCIX.

C. ק

מִזְמוֹר לְתוֹדָה׃

הָרִיעוּ לַיהוָה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ׃ 2 עִבְדוּ אֶת־יְהוָה בְּשִׂמְחָה
בֹּאוּ לְפָנָיו בִּרְנָנָה׃ 3 דְּעוּ כִּי־יְהוָה הוּא אֱלֹהִים הוּא
עָשָׂנוּ וְלֹא׀ אֲנַחְנוּ עַמּוֹ וְצֹאן מַרְעִיתוֹ׃ 4 בֹּאוּ
שְׁעָרָיו ׀ בְּתוֹדָה חֲצֵרֹתָיו בִּתְהִלָּה הוֹדוּ לוֹ בָּרְכוּ
שְׁמוֹ׃ 5 כִּי־טוֹב יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ וְעַד־דֹּר וָדֹר
אֱמוּנָתוֹ׃

their children to the special care and service of some one god or goddess as its tutelary (*i.e.* protecting) deity, and in later times the custom of dedication was extended first to the homestead and then to the nation as St. George for England, St. Patrick for Ireland, &c.

* I quote Prof. Berner's words from Karpeles' "Jews and Judaism in the nineteenth century."—J.M.C.

Note on Ps. C. This Psalm tells us that to be cheerful and contented is one way of thanking and praising God. Another way of praising God is to make the very best use we possibly can of all the powers He has given us. For as the Psalm tells us, "He hath made us." He gave us our bodies and our minds and our souls, and if we try to make the very best use

PSALM CIII.

A Psalm of David.

BLESS the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name. 2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: 3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; Who healeth all thy diseases; 4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender meries; 5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's. 6 The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed. 7 He made known His ways unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel. 8 The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. 9 He will not always chide: neither will He keep His anger for ever. 10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. 11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him. 12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us.

we possibly can of these, we are thanking God for His gifts. Note on Ps. C.

He is always taking care of us, as a king guards his people and a shepherd his flock; only with infinitely greater perfection, for God is ever merciful and His commands are just and true for ever.

CIII. קג

לְדָוִד׃

בָּרֲכִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה וְכָל־קְרָבַי אֶת־שֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ׃
2 בָּרֲכִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה וְאַל־תִּשְׁכְּחִי כָּל־גְּמוּלָיו׃
3 הַסֹּלֵחַ לְכָל־עֲוֹנֵכִי הָרֹפֵא לְכָל־תַּחֲלוּאָיְכִי׃ 4 הַגּוֹאֵל
מִשַּׁחַת חַיָּיְכִי הַמְעַטְּרֵכִי חֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים׃ 5 הַמַּשְׂבִּיעַ
בַּטּוֹב עֶדְיֵךְ תִּתְחַדְּשׁ כַּנֶּשֶׁר נְעוּרָיְכִי׃ 6 עֹשֵׂה צְדָקוֹת
יְהוָה וּמִשְׁפָּטִים לְכָל־עֲשׁוּקִים׃ 7 יוֹדִיעַ דְּרָכָיו לְמֹשֶׁה
לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲלִילוֹתָיו׃ 8 רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן יְהוָה אֶרֶךְ
אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חָסֶד׃ 9 לֹא־לָנֶצַח יָרִיב וְלֹא לְעוֹלָם יִטּוֹר׃
10 לֹא־כַחֲטָאֵינוּ עָשָׂה לָנוּ וְלֹא כַעֲוֹנֹתֵינוּ גָּמַל עָלֵינוּ׃
11 כִּי כִגְבֹהַּ שָׁמַיִם עַל־הָאָרֶץ גָּבַר חַסְדּוֹ עַל־יְרֵאָיו׃
12 כִּרְחֹק מִזְרָח מִמַּעֲרָב הִרְחִיק מִמֶּנּוּ אֶת־פִּשָׁעֵינוּ׃

Ps. CIII. 13 Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. 14 For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust. 15 As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. 16 For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. 17 But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children: 18 To such as keep His covenant, and to those that remember His commandments to do them. 19 The LORD hath prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all. 20 Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do His word, hearkening unto the voice of His word. 21 Bless ye the LORD, all ye His hosts; ye ministers of His, that do His pleasure. 22 Bless ye the LORD, all ye His works in all places of His dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.

Note on Ps. CIII. The 103rd and 104th Psalms form one great song of praise. The beginning of each is the same, "Bless the Lord, O my soul."

In the 103rd Psalm the poet follows out the thought which these opening words bring into our minds about every individual human being. They make us think of God's tender care of us at every moment of our lives, and His great lovingkindness towards us all; how He pities us when we do wrong, and mercifully forgives us when we are sorry. We turn naturally to God for help when we are in distress—but when all is well with us we are too apt

13 כְּרַחֵם אָב עַל־בָּנִים רִחַם יְהוָה עַל־יְרֵאָיו׃ 14 כִּי־ Ps. CIII.
הוּא יָדַע יִצְרֵנוּ זָכוֹר כִּי־עָפָר אֲנָחְנוּ׃ 15 אֱנוֹשׁ
כֶּחָצִיר יָמָיו כְּצִיץ הַשָּׂדֶה כֵּן יָצִיץ׃ 16 כִּי רוּחַ
עָבְרָה־בּוֹ וְאֵינֶנּוּ וְלֹא־יַכִּירֶנּוּ עוֹד מְקוֹמוֹ׃ 17 וְחֶסֶד
יְהוָה | מֵעוֹלָם וְעַד־עוֹלָם עַל־יְרֵאָיו וְצִדְקָתוֹ לִבְנֵי
בָנִים׃ 18 לְשֹׁמְרֵי בְרִיתוֹ וּלְזֹכְרֵי פִקֻּדָיו לַעֲשׂוֹתָם׃
19 יְהוָה בַּשָּׁמַיִם הֵכִין כִּסְאוֹ וּמַלְכוּתוֹ בַּכֹּל מָשָׁלָה׃
20 בָּרְכוּ יְהוָה | מַלְאָכָיו גִּבֹּרֵי כֹחַ עֹשֵׂי דְבָרוֹ
לִשְׁמֹעַ בְּקוֹל דְּבָרוֹ׃ 21 בָּרְכוּ יְהוָה כָּל־צְבָאָיו
מְשָׁרְתָיו עֹשֵׂי רְצוֹנוֹ׃ 22 בָּרְכוּ יְהוָה | כָּל־מַעֲשָׂיו
בְּכָל־מְקוֹמוֹת מֶמְשַׁלְתּוֹ בָּרְכִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה׃

to take it as a matter of course, to "forget all His benefits," and to be self-satisfied through the omission of the daily task of self-criticism and the daily duty of humbly communing with God, in order to perceive our own shortcomings by the light of His perfect goodness, the thought of which should be ever stimulating us to try to do better. God in His mercy made known His wonderful works and the eternal laws of Right and Wrong, through Moses, to the Jews for them to tell and teach to the whole world. And the Psalmist reminds us not only to tell, but to *do* them ourselves in our daily life, and thus

Note on Ps. CIII.

Note on Ps. CIII.

to try to merit the mercy of God, which is everlasting, "to such as keep His covenant, and to those who remember His commandments to do them."

Note for Older Children.—The 17th and 18th verses are a complete sermon in themselves, and inspired a famous saying of a later preacher: "God is found by everyone who seeks Him, if the seeker goes steadfastly towards Him, nor ever turns astray."*

History, which tells both of the doers and of the violaters of God's commandments, teaches us great

* Maimonides.

PSALM CIV.

BLESS the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, Thou art very great; Thou art clothed with honour and majesty. 2 Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment: Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain: 3 Who layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters: Who maketh the clouds His chariot: Who walketh upon the wings of the wind: 4 Who maketh His angels spirits; His ministers a flaming fire: 5 Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever. 6 Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. 7 At Thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of Thy thunder they hasted away. 8 They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which Thou hast founded for them. 9 Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth. 10 He

moral lessons by the light of the eternal laws of Right and Wrong, and helps to build up the principles and characters of successive generations of men and women. As we read verses 14 to 17 we realize that, as each generation passes away, the place thereof shall know it in future ages only by what of good and helpful work it may have left us as a heritage, and an example to posterity. This thought is perhaps the greatest of all incentives to us all, to strive to remember God's commandments to *do* them.

Note on Ps. CIII.

CIV. קד

בָּרְכִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהַי גָּדַלְתָּ מְאֹד
הוֹד וְהָדָר לָבָשְׁתָּ׃ 2 עֹטֶה אוֹר כַּשַּׂלְמָה נוֹטֶה
שָׁמַיִם כַּיְרִיעָה׃ 3 הַמְקָרֶה בַמַּיִם עֲלִיּוֹתָיו הַשָּׂם
עָבִים רְכוּבוֹ הַמְהַלֵּךְ עַל־כַּנְפֵי־רוּחַ׃ 4 עֹשֶׂה מַלְאָכָיו
רוּחוֹת מְשָׁרְתָיו אֵשׁ לֹהֵט׃ 5 יָסַד־אֶרֶץ עַל־מְכוֹנֶיהָ
בַּל־תִּמּוֹט עוֹלָם וָעֶד׃ 6 תְּהוֹם כַּלְבוּשׁ כִּסִּיתוֹ עַל־
הָרִים יַעַמְדוּ־מָיִם׃ 7 מִן־גַּעֲרָתְךָ יְנוּסוּן מִן־קוֹל רַעַמְךָ
יֵחָפֵזוּן׃ 8 יַעֲלוּ הָרִים יֵרְדוּ בְקָעוֹת אֶל־מְקוֹם זֶה
יָסַדְתָּ לָהֶם׃ 9 גְּבוּל־שַׂמְתָּ בַל־יַעֲבֹרוּן בַּל־יְשֻׁבוּן
לְכַסּוֹת הָאָרֶץ׃ 10 הַמְשַׁלֵּחַ מַעְיָנִים בַּנְּחָלִים בֵּין

Ps. CIV. sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills. 11 They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst. 12 By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches. 13 He watereth the hills from His chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of Thy works. 14 He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth; 15 And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart. 16 The trees of the LORD are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which He hath planted; 17 Where the birds make their nests: as for the stork, the fir trees are her house. 18 The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats; and the rocks for the conies. 19 He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down. 20 Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth. 21 The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. 22 The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens. 23 Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening. 24 O LORD, how manifold are Thy works! in wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches. 25 So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. 26 There go the ships: there is that leviathan, whom Thou hast made to play therein. 27 These wait all

הָרִים יַהֲלֹכוּן׃ 11 יַשְׁקוּ כָּל־חַיְתוֹ שָׂדָי יִשְׁבְּרוּ פְרָאִים
צְמָאָם׃ 12 עֲלֵיהֶם עוֹף־הַשָּׁמַיִם יִשְׁכֹּנוּן מִבֵּין עֳפָאיִם*
יִתְּנוּ־קוֹל׃ 13 מַשְׁקֶה הָרִים מֵעֲלִיּוֹתָיו מִפְּרִי מַעֲשֶׂיךָ
תִּשְׂבַּע הָאָרֶץ׃ 14 מַצְמִיחַ חָצִיר | לַבְּהֵמָה וְעֵשֶׂב
לַעֲבֹדַת הָאָדָם לְהוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן־הָאָרֶץ׃ 15 וְיַיִן |
יְשַׂמַּח לְבַב־אֱנוֹשׁ לְהַצְהִיל פָּנִים מִשָּׁמֶן וְלֶחֶם לְבַב־
אֱנוֹשׁ יִסְעָד׃ 16 יִשְׂבְּעוּ עֲצֵי יְהוָה אַרְזֵי לְבָנוֹן אֲשֶׁר
נָטָע׃ 17 אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם צִפֳּרִים יְקַנֵּנוּ חֲסִידָה בְּרוֹשִׁים
בֵּיתָהּ׃ 18 הָרִים הַגְּבֹהִים לַיְעֵלִים סְלָעִים מַחְסֶה
לַשְׁפַנִּים׃ 19 עָשָׂה יָרֵחַ לְמוֹעֲדִים שֶׁמֶשׁ יָדַע מְבוֹאוֹ׃
20 תָּשֶׁת־חֹשֶׁךְ וְיְהִי לָיְלָה בּוֹ־תִרְמֹשׂ כָּל־חַיְתוֹ־יָעַר׃
21 הַכְּפִירִים שֹׁאֲגִים לַטָּרֶף וּלְבַקֵּשׁ מֵאֵל אָכְלָם׃
22 תִּזְרַח הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ יֵאָסֵפוּן וְאֶל־מְעוֹנֹתָם יִרְבָּצוּן׃
23 יֵצֵא אָדָם לְפָעֳלוֹ וְלַעֲבֹדָתוֹ עַדִּי־עָרֶב׃ 24 מָה־
רַבּוּ | מַעֲשֶׂיךָ | יְהוָה כֻּלָּם בְּחָכְמָה עָשִׂיתָ מָלְאָה
הָאָרֶץ קִנְיָנֶךָ׃ 25 זֶה | הַיָּם גָּדוֹל וּרְחַב יָדָיִם שָׁם־
רֶמֶשׂ וְאֵין מִסְפָּר חַיּוֹת קְטַנּוֹת עִם־גְּדֹלוֹת׃ 26 שָׁם
אֳנִיּוֹת יִהַלֵּכוּן לִוְיָתָן זֶה | יָצַרְתָּ לְשַׂחֵק־בּוֹ׃ 27 כֻּלָּם

Ps. CIV. upon Thee; that Thou mayest give them their meat in due season. 28 That Thou givest them they gather: Thou openest Thine hand, they are filled with good. 29 Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled: Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. 30 Thou sendest forth Thy spirit, they are created: and Thou renewest the face of the earth. 31 The glory of the LORD shall endure for ever: the LORD shall rejoice in His works. 32 He looked on the earth, and it trembleth: He toucheth the hills, and they smoke. 33 I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. 34 My meditation of Him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the LORD. 35 Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless thou the LORD, O my soul. Praise ye the LORD.

Note on Ps. CIV. In the 103rd Psalm, as we have seen, the words, "Bless the Lord, O my soul," lead the Psalmist to the thought of the relation of the Creator to mankind.

In the 104th Psalm the same words inspire the Psalmist with the thought of the Creator in relation to the whole world and its wonders.

The author of this Psalm must have travelled and seen many countries. He must have crossed the sea and seen whales, and the dolphins rolling about, and turning over and over in the water, looking just as if they were having a romp. He must have seen burning mountains with smoke pouring out from their summits, like Vesuvius and Etna, and he must

Ps. CIV

אֵלֶיךָ יְשַׂבֵּרוּן לָתֵת אָכְלָם בְּעִתּוֹ׃ 28 תִּתֵּן לָהֶם
יִלְקֹטוּן תִּפְתַּח יָדְךָ יִשְׂבְּעוּן טוֹב׃ 29 תַּסְתִּיר פָּנֶיךָ
יִבָּהֵלוּן תֹּסֵף רוּחָם יִגְוָעוּן וְאֶל־עֲפָרָם יְשׁוּבוּן׃
30 תְּשַׁלַּח רוּחֲךָ יִבָּרֵאוּן וּתְחַדֵּשׁ פְּנֵי אֲדָמָה׃
31 יְהִי כְבוֹד יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם יִשְׂמַח יְהוָה בְּמַעֲשָׂיו׃
32 הַמַּבִּיט לָאָרֶץ וַתִּרְעָד יִגַּע בֶּהָרִים וְיֶעֱשָׁנוּ׃
33 אָשִׁירָה לַיהוָה בְּחַיָּי אֲזַמְּרָה לֵאלֹהַי בְּעוֹדִי׃
34 יֶעֱרַב עָלָיו שִׂיחִי אָנֹכִי אֶשְׂמַח בַּיהוָה׃ 35 יִתַּמּוּ
חַטָּאִים | מִן־הָאָרֶץ וּרְשָׁעִים | עוֹד אֵינָם בָּרְכִי
נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה הַלְלוּ־יָהּ׃

Note on Ps. CIV.

have watched the course of rivers, from their beginnings amongst the hills, flowing down the valleys, "making grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man," and making other good and beautiful things to grow besides.

He observed how the trees are a natural home for the birds, and the hillsides for goats and deer, and how the wild animals all come out at night and wander about seeking their food from God,—and finding it. And then, when the sun rises, how they creep back to the forests and the caves, and man comes out to work in the sunlight. And when the sun goes down man goes home to rest.

As these pictures of the harmony of the ordering

Note on Ps. CIV.

of nature throughout the world, and in the life of man and of all living creatures flash on his "inward eye,"* the Psalmist feels overwhelmed with the sense of the wonderful work of the Creator, of His Infinite power, His Infinite wisdom, and the perfection of His lovingkindness to all that He has created. Thankfulness to God takes possession of his soul, and he pours out a song of praise and thanks.

Note for Older Children.—This beautiful Psalm has been described by a great literary critic as, of all poems, the one that "most truly fulfils the conditions of real poetry, high thoughts in magnificent periods." Its vivid word-pictures bring forcibly before us both the harmony and the economic marvels of creation—the perfection of the great laws of nature by which all creatures are fed and multiply, and all flowers and fruit, and seed thrive and increase by the combination of the forces of nature and the toil of man.

In these days of rapid transmission of facts and

* "They flash upon that inward eye,
That is the bliss of solitude." (Wordsworth.)

PSALM CV.

O GIVE thanks unto the LORD; call upon His name: make known His deeds among the people. 2 Sing unto Him, sing psalms unto Him: talk ye of all His wondrous works. 3 Glory ye in His holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD. 4 Seek the LORD, and His strength: seek His face evermore. 5 Remember His marvellous works that He hath done; His wonders, and the

things by means of ocean cable and of a world-wide network of steamships and railways, it needs an effort of imagination to realize the possibility of a land in famine. We are apt to forget that we (like our ancestor Jacob) owe "bread to eat and raiment to wear" to the Divine ordering of Nature by which bread is brought forth out of the earth, and grass is made to grow on the mountains. The custom of saying a word of thanks at meals, however brief, to Him Who also "giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry," is a fitting offering to God, and a timely reminder to ourselves that the dominion of man over the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea is a gift and a trust from the Almighty. Note on Ps. CIV.

Let us always remember that we, who have been given dominion over all dumb creatures, have also been given the responsibility of using our power justly and kindly. We shall not be held guiltless if, by thoughtlessness or cruelty, we wantonly inflict pain on birds or beasts or fishes or insects; or if we practise or sanction prodigal waste of animal life.

CV. קה

הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה קִרְאוּ בִשְׁמוֹ הוֹדִיעוּ בָעַמִּים עֲלִילוֹתָיו׃
2 שִׁירוּ־לוֹ זַמְּרוּ־לוֹ שִׂיחוּ בְּכָל־נִפְלְאוֹתָיו׃ 3 הִתְהַלְלוּ
בְּשֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ יִשְׂמַח לֵב | מְבַקְשֵׁי יְהוָה׃ 4 דִּרְשׁוּ
יְהוָה וְעֻזּוֹ בַּקְּשׁוּ פָנָיו תָּמִיד׃ 5 זִכְרוּ נִפְלְאֹתָיו
אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה מֹפְתָיו וּמִשְׁפְּטֵי־פִיהוּ׃ 6 זֶרַע אַבְרָהָם

Ps. CV. judgments of His mouth; 6 O ye seed of Abraham His servant, ye children of Jacob His chosen. 7 He is the LORD our God: His judgments are in all the earth.

8 He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which He commanded to a thousand generations. 9 Which covenant He made with Abraham, and His oath unto Isaac; 10 And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant: 11 Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance: 12 When they were but a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it. 13 When they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people; 14 He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, He reproved kings for their sakes; 15 Saying, Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm.

16 Moreover He called for a famine upon the land: He brake the whole staff of bread. 17 He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: 18 Whose feet they hurt with fetters: his soul entered into the iron: 19 Until the time that His word came: the command of the LORD tried him. 20 The king sent and loosed him: even the ruler of the people, and let him go free. 21 He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance: 22 To bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom.

23 Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham. 24 And He increased

Ps. CV

עַבְדּוֹ בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב בְּחִירָיו׃ 7 הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ מִשְׁפָּטָיו׃ 8 זָכַר לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ דָּבָר
צִוָּה לְאֶלֶף דּוֹר׃ 9 אֲשֶׁר כָּרַת אֶת־אַבְרָהָם וּשְׁבוּעָתוֹ
לְיִשְׂחָק׃ 10 וַיַּעֲמִידֶהָ לְיַעֲקֹב לְחֹק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרִית
עוֹלָם׃ 11 לֵאמֹר לְךָ אֶתֵּן אֶת־אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן חֶבֶל
נַחֲלַתְכֶם׃ 12 בִּהְיוֹתָם מְתֵי מִסְפָּר כִּמְעַט וְגָרִים בָּהּ׃
13 וַיִּתְהַלְּכוּ מִגּוֹי אֶל־גּוֹי מִמַּמְלָכָה אֶל־עַם אַחֵר׃
14 לֹא־הִנִּיחַ אָדָם לְעָשְׁקָם וַיּוֹכַח עֲלֵיהֶם מְלָכִים׃
15 אַל־תִּגְּעוּ בִמְשִׁיחָי וְלִנְבִיאַי אַל־תָּרֵעוּ׃ 16 וַיִּקְרָא
רָעָב עַל־הָאָרֶץ כָּל־מַטֵּה־לֶחֶם שָׁבָר׃ 17 שָׁלַח
לִפְנֵיהֶם אִישׁ לְעֶבֶד נִמְכַּר יוֹסֵף׃ 18 עִנּוּ בַכֶּבֶל
רַגְלָיו בַּרְזֶל בָּאָה נַפְשׁוֹ׃ 19 עַד־עֵת בֹּא־דְבָרוֹ אִמְרַת
יְהוָה צְרָפָתְהוּ׃ 20 שָׁלַח־מֶלֶךְ וַיַּתִּירֵהוּ מֹשֵׁל עַמִּים
וַיַּפְתְּחֵהוּ׃ 21 שָׂמוֹ אָדוֹן לְבֵיתוֹ וּמֹשֵׁל בְּכָל־קִנְיָנוֹ׃
22 לֶאְסֹר שָׂרָיו בְּנַפְשׁוֹ וּזְקֵנָיו יְחַכֵּם׃ 23 וַיָּבֹא
יִשְׂרָאֵל מִצְרָיִם וְיַעֲקֹב גָּר בְּאֶרֶץ־חָם׃ 24 וַיָּפֶר אֶת־
עַמּוֹ מְאֹד וַיַּעַצְמֵהוּ מִצָּרָיו׃ 25 הָפַךְ לִבָּם לִשְׂנֹא

Ps. CV. His people greatly; and made them stronger than their enemies. 25 He turned their heart to hate His people, to deal subtilly with His servants. 26 He sent Moses His servant: and Aaron whom He had chosen. 27 They showed His signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham. 28 He sent darkness, and made it dark; and they rebelled not against his word. 29 He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish. 30 Their land brought forth frogs in abundance, in the chambers of their kings. 31 He spake, and there came divers sorts of flies, and lice in all their borders. 32 He gave them hail for rain, and flaming fire in their land. 33 He smote their vines also and their fig trees; and brake the trees of their borders. 34 He spake, and the locusts came, and caterpillars, and that without number, 35 And did eat up all the herbs in their land, and devour the fruit of their ground. 36 He smote also all the firstborn in their land, the chief of all their strength. 37 He brought them forth also with silver and gold: and there was not one feeble person among their tribes.

38 Egypt was glad when they departed: for the fear of them fell upon them. 39 He spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to give light in the night. 40 The people asked, and He brought quails, and satisfied them with the bread of heaven. 41 He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places like a river. 42 For He remembered His holy promise, and Abraham His servant. 43 And He brought forth His people with

עַמּוֹ לְהִתְנַכֵּל בַּעֲבָדָיו׃ 26 שָׁלַח מֹשֶׁה עַבְדּוֹ אַהֲרֹן
אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר־בּוֹ׃ 27 שָׂמוּ בָם דִּבְרֵי אֹתוֹתָיו וּמֹפְתִים
בְּאֶרֶץ חָם׃ 28 שָׁלַח חֹשֶׁךְ וַיַּחְשִׁךְ וְלֹא־מָרוּ אֶת־
דְּבָרְיוֹ׃ 29 הָפַךְ אֶת־מֵימֵיהֶם לְדָם וַיָּמֶת אֶת־דְּגָתָם׃
30 שָׁרַץ אַרְצָם צְפַרְדְּעִים בְּחַדְרֵי מַלְכֵיהֶם׃ 31 אָמַר
וַיָּבֹא עָרֹב כִּנִּים בְּכָל־גְּבוּלָם׃ 32 נָתַן גִּשְׁמֵיהֶם בָּרָד
אֵשׁ לֶהָבוֹת בְּאַרְצָם׃ 33 וַיַּךְ גַּפְנָם וּתְאֵנָתָם וַיְשַׁבֵּר
עֵץ גְּבוּלָם׃ 34 אָמַר וַיָּבֹא אַרְבֶּה וְיֶלֶק וְאֵין מִסְפָּר׃
35 וַיֹּאכַל כָּל־עֵשֶׂב בְּאַרְצָם וַיֹּאכַל פְּרִי אַדְמָתָם׃
36 וַיַּךְ כָּל־בְּכוֹר בְּאַרְצָם רֵאשִׁית לְכָל־אוֹנָם׃
37 וַיּוֹצִיאֵם בְּכֶסֶף וְזָהָב וְאֵין בִּשְׁבָטָיו כּוֹשֵׁל׃
38 שָׂמַח מִצְרַיִם בְּצֵאתָם כִּי־נָפַל פַּחְדָּם עֲלֵיהֶם׃
39 פָּרַשׂ עָנָן לְמָסָךְ וְאֵשׁ לְהָאִיר לָיְלָה׃ 40 שָׁאַל
וַיָּבֵא שְׂלָו וְלֶחֶם שָׁמַיִם יַשְׂבִּיעֵם׃ 41 פָּתַח צוּר
וַיָּזוּבוּ מַיִם הָלְכוּ בַּצִּיּוֹת נָהָר׃ 42 כִּי־זָכַר אֶת־דְּבַר
קָדְשׁוֹ אֶת־אַבְרָהָם עַבְדּוֹ 43 וַיּוֹצֵא עַמּוֹ בְשָׂשׂוֹן

Ps. CV. joy, and His chosen with gladness: 44 And gave them the lands of the heathen: and they inherited the labour of the people; 45 That they might observe His statutes, and keep His laws. Praise ye the LORD.

Note on Ps. CV. The 105th, 106th and 107th Psalms form one long ode in three parts. Each part presents a different aspect of the might and mercy of God.

The 105th Psalm proclaims with pæans of praise and thanks that God alone is the Creator of all, and that the whole universe is governed by the Divine ordering. "He is the Lord our God: His judgments are in all the earth."

The Psalmist calls on Israel to proclaim this God-given Message to the world.

The greatness of the Message is indicated by the vividly told story of the Messenger Race, mercifully and marvellously preserved through all sorts of dangers and vicissitudes to bear and to declare to countless generations the sacred, everlasting Message confided to it, the Message of the Covenant between God and man, between the Divine spirit and every human being, however humble.

This covenant is the very essence of Judaism. Belief in the one and only God carries with it the belief that every human soul is directly responsible to the Creator, with no human or superhuman intermediary between the spirit of God and the soul of man. Over and over again this is insisted on in Deuteronomy. Moses presents no elaborate dogma to justify virtue or to condemn vice, but he insists on practical effort in daily life to obey the eternal moral laws that

בְּרִנָּה אֶת־בְּחִירָיו׃ 44 וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם אַרְצוֹת גּוֹיִם Ps. CV.
וַעֲמַל לְאֻמִּים יִרָשׁוּ׃ 45 בַּעֲבוּר | יִשְׁמְרוּ חֻקָּיו
וְתוֹרֹתָיו יִנְצֹרוּ הַלְלוּ־יָהּ׃

enable the human mind to discern between Right and Wrong. Note on Ps. CV.

"And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God "require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to "walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve "the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all "thy soul" (Deut. x. 12).

"This commandment which I command thee this "day is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. "It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who "shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it to us, that "we may hear it and do it? Neither is it beyond the "sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the "sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear "it and do it? But this word is very nigh thee, in "thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do "it" (Deut. xxx. 11—14).

Moses calls on all Israel, and through Israel on all mankind, to love God with all the power of love, of thought, and of action (Deut. vi. 5).

This is the ideal of life to which every one of the Messenger Race must be ever striving to attain, in their every thought and word and deed.

The 105th Psalm is not described as a Psalm of David, but (like the 96th) a portion of it forms a part of David's song of Praise when the ark was brought to Jerusalem.* (See notes on Psalms lxxxi. and xcvi.)

* I. Chron., ch. xvi.

PSALM CVI.

PRAISE ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever. 2 Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD? who can show forth all His praise? 3 Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times. 4 Remember me, O LORD, with the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people: O visit me with Thy salvation; 5 That I may see the good of Thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of Thy nation, that I may glory with Thine inheritance.

6 We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly. 7 Our fathers understood not Thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of Thy mercies; but provoked Him at the sea, even at the Red sea. 8 Nevertheless He saved them for His name's sake, that He might make His mighty power to be known. 9 He rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up: so He led them through the depths, as through the wilderness. 10 And He saved them from the hand of him that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy. 11 And the waters covered their enemies: there was not one of them left. 12 Then believed they His words; they sang His praise. 13 They soon forgat His works; they waited not for His counsel: 14 But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the

CVI. קו

הַלְלוּ־יָהּ | הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי־טוֹב כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ׃
2 מִי יְמַלֵּל גְּבוּרוֹת יְהוָה יַשְׁמִיעַ כָּל־תְּהִלָּתוֹ׃
3 אַשְׁרֵי שֹׁמְרֵי מִשְׁפָּט עֹשֵׂה צְדָקָה בְכָל־עֵת׃
4 זָכְרֵנִי יְהוָה בִּרְצוֹן עַמֶּךָ פָּקְדֵנִי בִּישׁוּעָתֶךָ׃
5 לִרְאוֹת | בְּטוּבַת בְּחִירֶיךָ לִשְׂמֹחַ בְּשִׂמְחַת גּוֹיֶךָ
לְהִתְהַלֵּל עִם־נַחֲלָתֶךָ׃ 6 חָטָאנוּ עִם־אֲבֹתֵינוּ הֶעֱוִינוּ
הִרְשָׁעְנוּ׃ 7 אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְמִצְרַיִם | לֹא־הִשְׂכִּילוּ נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ
לֹא זָכְרוּ אֶת־רֹב חֲסָדֶיךָ וַיַּמְרוּ עַל־יָם בְּיַם־סוּף׃
8 וַיּוֹשִׁיעֵם לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ לְהוֹדִיעַ אֶת גְּבוּרָתוֹ׃ 9 וַיִּגְעַר
בְּיַם־סוּף וַיֶּחֱרָב וַיּוֹלִיכֵם בַּתְּהֹמוֹת כַּמִּדְבָּר׃ 10 וַיּוֹשִׁיעֵם
מִיַּד שׂוֹנֵא וַיִּגְאָלֵם מִיַּד אוֹיֵב׃ 11 וַיְכַסּוּ־מַיִם
צָרֵיהֶם אֶחָד מֵהֶם לֹא נוֹתָר׃ 12 וַיַּאֲמִינוּ בִּדְבָרָיו
יָשִׁירוּ תְהִלָּתוֹ׃ 13 מֶהֱרוּ שָׁכְחוּ מַעֲשָׂיו לֹא־חִכּוּ
לַעֲצָתוֹ׃ 14 וַיִּתְאַוּוּ תַאֲוָה בַּמִּדְבָּר וַיְנַסּוּ־אֵל בִּישִׁימוֹן׃

Ps. CVI. desert. 15 And He gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.

16 They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the LORD. 17 The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram. 18 And a fire was kindled in their company; the flame burned up the wicked.

19 They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image. 20 Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass. 21 They forgat God their saviour, which had done great things in Egypt; 22 Wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red sea. 23 Therefore He said that he would destroy them, had not Moses His chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away His wrath, lest He should destroy them.

24 Yea, they despised the pleasant land, they believed not His word: 25 But murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the LORD. 26 Therefore He lifted up his hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness: 27 To overthrow their seed also among the nations, and to scatter them in the lands.

28 They joined themselves also unto Baalpeor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead. 29 Thus they provoked Him to anger with their inventions: and the plague brake in upon them. 30 Then stood up Phinehas, and executed judgment: and so the plague was stayed. 31 And that was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore.

15 וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם שֶׁאֱלָתָם וַיְשַׁלַּח רָזון בְּנַפְשָׁם׃ 16 וַיְקַנְאוּ
לְמֹשֶׁה בַּמַּחֲנֶה לְאַהֲרֹן קְדוֹשׁ יְהוָה׃ 17 תִּפְתַּח־אֶרֶץ
וַתִּבְלַע דָּתָן וַתְּכַס עַל־עֲדַת אֲבִירָם׃ 18 וַתִּבְעַר־אֵשׁ
בַּעֲדָתָם לֶהָבָה תְּלַהֵט רְשָׁעִים׃ 19 יַעֲשׂוּ־עֵגֶל בְּחֹרֵב
וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְמַסֵּכָה׃ 20 וַיָּמִירוּ אֶת־כְּבוֹדָם בְּתַבְנִית
שׁוֹר אֹכֵל עֵשֶׂב׃ 21 שָׁכְחוּ אֵל מוֹשִׁיעָם עֹשֶׂה
גְדֹלוֹת בְּמִצְרָיִם׃ 22 נִפְלָאוֹת בְּאֶרֶץ חָם נוֹרָאוֹת
עַל־יַם־סוּף׃ 23 וַיֹּאמֶר לְהַשְׁמִידָם לוּלֵי מֹשֶׁה בְחִירוֹ
עָמַד בַּפֶּרֶץ לְפָנָיו לְהָשִׁיב חֲמָתוֹ מֵהַשְׁחִית׃ 24 וַיִּמְאֲסוּ
בְּאֶרֶץ חֶמְדָּה לֹא הֶאֱמִינוּ לִדְבָרוֹ׃ 25 וַיֵּרָגְנוּ
בְּאָהֳלֵיהֶם לֹא שָׁמְעוּ בְּקוֹל יְהוָה׃ 26 וַיִּשָּׂא יָדוֹ
לָהֶם לְהַפִּיל אוֹתָם בַּמִּדְבָּר׃ 27 וּלְהַפִּיל זַרְעָם בַּגּוֹיִם
וְלְזָרוֹתָם בָּאֲרָצוֹת׃ 28 וַיִּצָּמְדוּ לְבַעַל פְּעוֹר וַיֹּאכְלוּ
זִבְחֵי מֵתִים׃ 29 וַיַּכְעִיסוּ בְּמַעַלְלֵיהֶם וַתִּפְרָץ־בָּם
מַגֵּפָה׃ 30 וַיַּעֲמֹד פִּינְחָס וַיְפַלֵּל וַתֵּעָצַר הַמַּגֵּפָה׃
31 וַתֵּחָשֶׁב לוֹ לִצְדָקָה לְדֹר וָדֹר עַד־עוֹלָם׃

Ps. CVI. 32 They provoked anger also at the waters of Meribah so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes: 33 Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.

34 They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the LORD commanded them: 35 But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. 36 And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them. 37 Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto idols. 38 And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood. 39 Thus were they defiled with their own works. 40 Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against His people, insomuch that He abhorred His own inheritance. 41 And He gave them into the hand of the heathen; and they that hated them ruled over them. 42 Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand.

43 Many times did He deliver them; but they provoked Him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity. 44 Nevertheless He regarded their affliction when He heard their cry: 45 And He remembered for them His covenant, and repented according to the multitude of His mercies. 46 He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives.

47 Save us, O LORD our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto Thy holy

Ps. CVI.

32 וַיַּקְצִיפוּ עַל־מֵי מְרִיבָה וַיֵּרַע לְמֹשֶׁה בַּעֲבוּרָם׃
33 כִּי־הִמְרוּ אֶת־רוּחוֹ וַיְבַטֵּא בִּשְׂפָתָיו׃ 34 לֹא־
הִשְׁמִידוּ אֶת־הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר אָמַר יְהוָה לָהֶם׃ 35 וַיִּתְעָרְבוּ
בַגּוֹיִם וַיִּלְמְדוּ מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם׃ 36 וַיַּעַבְדוּ אֶת־עֲצַבֵּיהֶם
וַיִּהְיוּ לָהֶם לְמוֹקֵשׁ׃ 37 וַיִּזְבְּחוּ אֶת־בְּנֵיהֶם וְאֶת־
בְּנוֹתֵיהֶם לַשֵּׁדִים׃ 38 וַיִּשְׁפְּכוּ דָם נָקִי דַּם בְּנֵיהֶם
וּבְנוֹתֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר זָבְחוּ לַעֲצַבֵּי כְנָעַן וַתֶּחֱנַף הָאָרֶץ
בַּדָּמִים׃ 39 וַיִּטְמְאוּ בְמַעֲשֵׂיהֶם׃ 40 וַיִּחַר־אַף
יְהוָה בְּעַמּוֹ וַיְתָעֵב אֶת־נַחֲלָתוֹ׃ 41 וַיִּתְּנֵם בְּיַד־גּוֹיִם
וַיִּמְשְׁלוּ בָהֶם שֹׂנְאֵיהֶם׃ 42 וַיִּלְחָצוּם אוֹיְבֵיהֶם
וַיִּכָּנְעוּ תַּחַת יָדָם׃ 43 פְּעָמִים רַבּוֹת יַצִּילֵם וְהֵמָּה
יַמְרוּ בַעֲצָתָם וַיָּמֹכּוּ בַּעֲוֹנָם׃ 44 וַיַּרְא בַּצַּר לָהֶם
בְּשָׁמְעוֹ אֶת־רִנָּתָם׃ 45 וַיִּזְכֹּר לָהֶם בְּרִיתוֹ וַיִּנָּחֵם
כְּרֹב חֲסָדָו׃ 46 וַיִּתֵּן אוֹתָם לְרַחֲמִים לִפְנֵי כָּל־
שׁוֹבֵיהֶם׃ 47 הוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ | יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְקַבְּצֵנוּ
מִן־הַגּוֹיִם לְהוֹדוֹת לְשֵׁם קָדְשֶׁךָ לְהִשְׁתַּבֵּחַ בִּתְהִלָּתֶךָ׃

Ps. CVI. name, and to triumph in Thy praise. 48 Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the LORD.

Note on Ps. CVI. The 106th Psalm opens with a song of praise and thanks, and recalls the high privilege God conferred on the Israelites in making them His chosen messengers. Continuing the theme of the 105th Psalm—the history of the Messenger Race—the Psalmist laments the way in which the Israelites were many times faithless to their great mission, and records God's merciful forgiveness towards them whenever they were *truly* sorry for their evil-doings.

PSALM CVII.

O GIVE thanks unto the LORD, for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever.

2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy; 3 And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south. 4 They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. 5 Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. 6 Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses. 7 And He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.

48 בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה | אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן־הָעוֹלָם | וְעַד Ps. CVI.
הָעוֹלָם וְאָמַר כָּל־הָעָם אָמֵן הַלְלוּ־יָהּ׃

The impressive lesson so tersely taught in verse 15 comes home to us all, "He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their souls." If we covet that which we have not, instead of thankfully making the best of what we have—the attainment of our desires will never bring into our souls the full and serene happiness that is the lot of those who in their times of trial have never lost faith in the perfect justice and mercy of God. Note on Ps. CVI.

CVII. קז

הֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי־טוֹב כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ׃ 2 יֹאמְרוּ
גְּאוּלֵי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר גְּאָלָם מִיַּד צָר׃ 3 וּמֵאֲרָצוֹת
קִבְּצָם מִמִּזְרָח וּמִמַּעֲרָב מִצָּפוֹן וּמִיָּם׃ 4 תָּעוּ
בַמִּדְבָּר בִּישִׁימוֹן דֶּרֶךְ עִיר מוֹשָׁב לֹא מָצָאוּ׃
5 רְעֵבִים גַּם־צְמֵאִים נַפְשָׁם בָּהֶם תִּתְעַטָּף׃ 6 וַיִּצְעֲקוּ
אֶל־יְהוָה בַּצַּר לָהֶם מִמְּצוּקוֹתֵיהֶם יַצִּילֵם׃ 7 וַיַּדְרִיכֵם

Ps. CVII. 8 Oh that men would praise the LORD for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!

9 For He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness. 10 Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron; 11 Because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the most High: 12 Therefore He brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and there was none to help. 13 Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses. 14 He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder.

15 Oh that men would praise the LORD for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!

16 For He hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder. 17 Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted. 18 Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death. 19 Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and He saveth them out of their distresses. 20 He sent His word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.

21 Oh that men would praise the LORD for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! 22 And let them sacrifice the

בְּדֶרֶךְ יִשְׁרָה לָלֶכֶת אֶל־עִיר מוֹשָׁב׃ 8 יוֹדוּ לַיהוָה
חַסְדּוֹ וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו לִבְנֵי אָדָם׃ 9 כִּי־הִשְׂבִּיעַ נֶפֶשׁ שׁוֹקֵקָה
וְנֶפֶשׁ רְעֵבָה מִלֵּא־טוֹב׃ 10 יֹשְׁבֵי חֹשֶׁךְ וְצַלְמָוֶת
אֲסִירֵי עֹנִי וּבַרְזֶל׃ 11 כִּי־הֵמְרוּ אִמְרֵי־אֵל וַעֲצַת
עֶלְיוֹן נָאָצוּ׃ 12 וַיַּכְנַע בֶּעָמָל לִבָּם כָּשְׁלוּ וְאֵין עֹזֵר׃
13 וַיִּזְעֲקוּ אֶל־יְהוָה בַּצַּר לָהֶם מִמְּצוּקוֹתֵיהֶם יוֹשִׁיעֵם׃
14 יוֹצִיאֵם מֹחֶשֶׁךְ וְצַלְמָוֶת וּמוֹסְרוֹתֵיהֶם יְנַתֵּק׃
15 יוֹדוּ לַיהוָה חַסְדּוֹ וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו לִבְנֵי אָדָם׃
16 כִּי־שִׁבַּר דַּלְתוֹת נְחֹשֶׁת וּבְרִיחֵי בַרְזֶל גִּדֵּעַ׃
17 אֱוִלִים מִדֶּרֶךְ פִּשְׁעָם וּמֵעֲוֹנֹתֵיהֶם יִתְעַנּוּ׃ 18 כָּל־
אֹכֶל תְּתַעֵב נַפְשָׁם וַיַּגִּיעוּ עַד־שַׁעֲרֵי־מָוֶת׃ 19 וַיִּזְעֲקוּ
אֶל־יְהוָה בַּצַּר לָהֶם מִמְּצוּקוֹתֵיהֶם יוֹשִׁיעֵם׃ 20 יִשְׁלַח
דְּבָרוֹ וְיִרְפָּאֵם וִימַלֵּט מִשְּׁחִיתוֹתָם׃ 21 יוֹדוּ לַיהוָה
חַסְדּוֹ וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו לִבְנֵי אָדָם׃ 22 וְיִזְבְּחוּ זִבְחֵי תוֹדָה

Ps. CVII. sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare His works in joyous song.

23 They that go down to the sea in ships, that do
business in great waters; 24 These see the works
of the LORD, and His wonders in the deep. 25 For
He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which
lifteth up the waves thereof. 26 They mount up to
the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their
soul is melted because of trouble. 27 They reel to
and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at
their wit's end. 28 Then they cry unto the LORD
in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their
distresses. 29 He maketh the storm a calm, so that
the waves thereof are still. 30 Then are they glad
because they be quiet; so He bringeth them unto
their desired haven.

31 Oh that men would praise the LORD for His
goodness, and for His wonderful works to the
children of men!

32 Let them exalt Him also in the congregation
of the people, and praise Him in the assembly of the
elders. 33 He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and
the watersprings into dry ground; 34 A fruitful land
into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that
dwell therein. 35 He turneth the wilderness into a
standing water, and dry ground into watersprings.
36 And there He maketh the hungry to dwell, that
they may prepare a city for habitation; 37 And
sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may yield
fruits of increase. 38 He blesseth them also, so

וַיְסַפְּרוּ מַעֲשָׂיו בְּרִנָּה׃ 23 יוֹרְדֵי הַיָּם בָּאֳנִיּוֹת עֹשֵׂי
מְלָאכָה בְּמַיִם רַבִּים׃ 24 הֵמָּה רָאוּ מַעֲשֵׂי יְהוָה
וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו בִּמְצוּלָה׃ 25 וַיֹּאמֶר וַיַּעֲמֵד רוּחַ סְעָרָה
וַתְּרוֹמֵם גַּלָּיו׃ 26 יַעֲלוּ שָׁמַיִם יֵרְדוּ תְהוֹמוֹת נַפְשָׁם
בְּרָעָה תִתְמוֹגָג׃ 27 יָחוֹגּוּ וְיָנוּעוּ כַּשִּׁכּוֹר וְכָל־חָכְמָתָם
תִּתְבַּלָּע׃ 28 וַיִּצְעֲקוּ אֶל־יְהוָה בַּצַּר לָהֶם וּמִמְּצוּקֹתֵיהֶם
יוֹצִיאֵם׃ 29 יָקֵם סְעָרָה לִדְמָמָה וַיֶּחֱשׁוּ גַּלֵּיהֶם׃
30 וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ כִי־יִשְׁתֹּקוּ וַיַּנְחֵם אֶל־מְחוֹז חֶפְצָם׃
31 יוֹדוּ לַיהוָה חַסְדּוֹ וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו לִבְנֵי אָדָם׃
32 וִירוֹמְמוּהוּ בִּקְהַל־עָם וּבְמוֹשַׁב זְקֵנִים יְהַלְלוּהוּ׃
33 יָשֵׂם נְהָרוֹת לְמִדְבָּר וּמֹצָאֵי מַיִם לְצִמָּאוֹן׃
34 אֶרֶץ פְּרִי לִמְלֵחָה מֵרָעַת יוֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ׃ 35 יָשֵׂם
מִדְבָּר לַאֲגַם־מַיִם וְאֶרֶץ צִיָּה לְמֹצָאֵי מָיִם׃ 36 וַיּוֹשֶׁב
שָׁם רְעֵבִים וַיְכוֹנְנוּ עִיר מוֹשָׁב׃ 37 וַיִּזְרְעוּ שָׂדוֹת וַיִּטְּעוּ
כְרָמִים וַיַּעֲשׂוּ פְּרִי תְבוּאָה׃ 38 וַיְבָרְכֵם וַיִּרְבּוּ

Ps. CVII. that they are multiplied greatly; and suffereth not their cattle to decrease.

39 Again, they are minished and brought low through oppression, affliction, and sorrow. 40 He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way. 41 Yet setteth He the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock. 42 The righteous shall see it, and rejoice: and all iniquity shall stop her mouth. 43 Whoso is wise, and giveth heed to these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD.

Note on Ps. CVII. THE opening verse gives the theme of the whole: "O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever."

The closing verse states with impressive simplicity the moral of the whole Psalm: they who learn to understand "these things" (i.e., our dependence on God throughout our lives) learn to understand His infinite mercy to us.

For Older Children.—The 107th Psalm breathes the noblest universalism, in its vivid picture of the beneficent Spirit that rules the whole world, in its passionate invocation to all mankind to see and understand the Divine Power, the Divine justice and the Divine mercy. There is no trace of the idea of a specially favoured nation in the lofty and philosophic thought presented in the six graphic word-pictures of the poem. The chorus verse is a fervid and yet simple appeal to the minds and hearts of all mankind.

The rest of the poem is divided into six stanzas,

מְאֹד וּבְהֶמְתָּם לֹא יַמְעִיט׃ 39 וַיִּמְעֲטוּ וַיָּשֹׁחוּ Ps. CVII.
מֵעֹצֶר רָעָה וְיָגוֹן׃ 40 שֹׁפֵךְ בּוּז עַל־נְדִיבִים וַיַּתְעֵם
בְּתֹהוּ לֹא־דָרֶךְ׃ 41 וַיְשַׂגֵּב אֶבְיוֹן מֵעֹנִי וַיָּשֶׂם כַּצֹּאן
מִשְׁפָּחוֹת׃ 42 יִרְאוּ יְשָׁרִים וְיִשְׂמָחוּ וְכָל־עַוְלָה קָפְצָה
פִיהָ׃ 43 מִי־חָכָם וְיִשְׁמָר־אֵלֶּה וְיִתְבּוֹנְנוּ חַסְדֵי יְהוָה׃

and a chorus verse which is repeated after each of the first four stanzas: "O that men would praise the Lord for His mercy, and His wonderful works to the children of men." The chorus verse is the answering refrain to the opening verse, and emphasizes the connection of that verse with each successive stanza. The English version, beautiful as it is, does not quite convey the echoing effect of the Hebrew. Note on Ps. CVII.

Opening verse:

הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב ׀ כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ

Chorus verse:

יוֹדוּ לַיהוָה חַסְדּוֹ ׀ וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו לִבְנֵי אָדָם

The first two words of each are the same, the differing first letters of the first word merely being the difference between the second and third person of

Note on Ps. CVII.

the verb. In the opening verse, "Give ye thanks to the Lord" (הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה); in the chorus verse, (8, 15, 21, 31,) "O that they (i.e., mankind) would give thanks to the Lord" (יוֹדוּ לַיהוָה).

A prelude to the refrain is introduced just before the last verse of each stanza (verses 6, 13, 19, 28), "Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble,

PSALM CXI.

PRAISE ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation. 2 The works of the LORD are great, sought out of all them that delight therein. 3 His work is honourable and glorious: and His righteousness endureth for ever. 4 He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered: the LORD is gracious and full of compassion. 5 He hath given meat unto them that fear Him: He will ever be mindful of His covenant. 6 He hath showed His people the power of His works, that He may give them the heritage of the heathen. 7 The works of His hands are verity and judgment; all His commandments are sure. 8 They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness. 9 He sent redemption unto His people: He hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend

and He saveth them out of their distresses." When we are happy and prosperous, we are apt to forget to offer to God our tribute of thanks in word and deed. But when trouble overtakes us we all cry to God in our anguish to save us out of our distresses, and then we learn to "understand the lovingkindness of God."

Note on Ps. CVII.

CXI. קיא

הַלְלוּ־יָהּ | אוֹדֶה יְהוָה בְּכָל־לֵבָב בְּסוֹד יְשָׁרִים
וְעֵדָה: 2 גְּדֹלִים מַעֲשֵׂי יְהוָה דְּרוּשִׁים לְכָל־חֲפָצֵיהֶם:
3 הוֹד־וְהָדָר פָּעֳלוֹ וְצִדְקָתוֹ עֹמֶדֶת לָעַד: 4 זֵכֶר
עָשָׂה לְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם יְהוָה: 5 טֶרֶף נָתַן
לִירֵאָיו יִזְכֹּר לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ: 6 כֹּחַ מַעֲשָׂיו הִגִּיד
לְעַמּוֹ לָתֶת לָהֶם נַחֲלַת גּוֹיִם: 7 מַעֲשֵׂי יָדָיו אֱמֶת
וּמִשְׁפָּט נֶאֱמָנִים כָּל־פִּקּוּדָיו: 8 סְמוּכִים לָעַד לְעוֹלָם
עֲשׂוּיִם בֶּאֱמֶת וְיָשָׁר: 9 פְּדוּת | שָׁלַח לְעַמּוֹ צִוָּה
לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ קָדוֹשׁ וְנוֹרָא שְׁמוֹ: 10 רֵאשִׁית חָכְמָה |

Ps. CXI. is His name. 10 Fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do so: His praise endureth for ever.

PSALM CXII.

PRAISE ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in His commandments. 2 His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed. 3 Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever. 4 Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous. 5 Good is the man who is gracious, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs justly. 6 Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. 7 He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD. 8 His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, even when he looks upon his enemies. 9 He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour. 10 The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish.

Ps. CXI יִרְאַת יְהוָה שֵׂכֶל טוֹב לְכָל־עֹשֵׂיהֶם תְּהִלָּתוֹ עֹמֶדֶת
לָעַד׃

CXII. קיב

הַלְלוּ־יָהּ ׀ אַשְׁרֵי־אִישׁ יָרֵא אֶת־יְהוָה בְּמִצְוֹתָיו
חָפֵץ מְאֹד׃ 2 גִּבּוֹר בָּאָרֶץ יִהְיֶה זַרְעוֹ דּוֹר יְשָׁרִים
יְבֹרָךְ׃ 3 הוֹן־וָעֹשֶׁר בְּבֵיתוֹ וְצִדְקָתוֹ עֹמֶדֶת לָעַד׃
4 זָרַח בַּחֹשֶׁךְ אוֹר לַיְשָׁרִים חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם וְצַדִּיק׃
5 טוֹב אִישׁ חוֹנֵן וּמַלְוֶה יְכַלְכֵּל דְּבָרָיו בְּמִשְׁפָּט׃
6 כִּי־לְעוֹלָם לֹא־יִמּוֹט לְזֵכֶר עוֹלָם יִהְיֶה צַדִּיק׃
7 מִשְּׁמוּעָה רָעָה לֹא יִירָא נָכוֹן לִבּוֹ בָּטֻחַ בַּיהוָה׃
8 סָמוּךְ לִבּוֹ לֹא יִירָא עַד אֲשֶׁר־יִרְאֶה בְצָרָיו׃
9 פִּזַּר ׀ נָתַן לָאֶבְיוֹנִים צִדְקָתוֹ עֹמֶדֶת לָעַד קַרְנוֹ
תָּרוּם בְּכָבוֹד׃ 10 רָשָׁע יִרְאֶה ׀ וְכָעָס שִׁנָּיו יַחֲרֹק
וְנָמָס תַּאֲוַת רְשָׁעִים תֹּאבֵד׃

Note on Ps. CXI. and Ps. CXII.

The 111th and 112th Psalms are evidently composed by the same author. They are alike in form, both Psalms being alphabetical.* They are also alike in subject, for both are poems in praise of wisdom, but the 111th is an ode to the wisdom and power of God; the 112th extols the wisdom and uprightness of a virtuous man.

Comparing the two Psalms verse by verse, we find the thought, and sometimes the very words in the one echoed, as it were, in the other. Thus, the third and fourth verses of both Psalms contain identical phrases, referring in cxi. to God, and in cxii. to man. "His righteousness endureth for ever" (verse 3 in both). "He is gracious and full of compassion" (verse 4 in both). Still more remarkable is the response of verses 5 and 9 in cxii. to verses 5 and 9 in cxi.—suggesting the thought that the perception of the mercifulness and bounteousness of God inspires generosity in man, and that charity is the highest form of human gratitude for the Divine mercy towards mankind.

The sixth, seventh, and eighth verses of cxii. tell of the serene courage that comes to all who realize the eternal goodness and wisdom of God proclaimed in the corresponding verses of cxi. For it is the thought of the infinite wisdom and infinite power of God that brings with it the thought of His infinite justice and mercy.

To understand how to conduct our lives so as to justify our existence and to make the best of our powers, we must first understand the Infinite Goodness and the Infinite Greatness of God. Realizing this, the Psalmist says:—"The fear† of the Lord is

* The initial letters of each half verse are in alphabetical order.

† The word "fear" in Hebrew means also awe and reverence, (compare Ps. xix., verse 6.) The word "reverend" in verse 9 also means full of awe.

the beginning of wisdom, a good understanding have all they that do so. His praise" (i.e. the silent praise of His wonderful works) "endureth for ever," because His works do not perish or decay like the works of men, but endure for ever and ever by reason of the immutable Divine laws by which God "reneweth the face of the earth."

Note on Ps. CXI. and Ps. CXII.

"The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom," the conclusion of Psalm cxi., is closely linked with the opening verse of Ps. cxii., "Happy is the man who feareth the Lord." Fear of God (not cowardly fear, but awe and reverence) is not only the fountain head of wisdom, but also the foundation of happiness. That is the theme of the 112th Psalm.

Man must stand in awe of God in order to get wisdom. He who has wisdom will also get happiness, the sort of happiness that is associated with goodness and that will keep him uncorrupted by the temptations of wealth and power, and undaunted by visitations of adversity—a happiness that fills his heart with gracious and practical sympathy for the difficulties and troubles of his fellow-creatures. Happiness of mind is based on the wisdom that leads to goodness; "The light that dawneth out of darkness for the upright," as the Psalmist puts it.

The spirit of verses 7 and 8 of Ps. cxii. is difficult to render in exact translation. The word "desire" in verse 8, used in the English Bible version, is misleading, and does not occur in the Hebrew. It seems to make the verse out of harmony with the rest of the Psalm, and suggests a special meaning as contrasted with the "desire of the wicked" in the tenth verse.

But the real contrast to verse 10 of Ps. cxii., "the desire of the wicked perisheth," is to be found in the

Note on Ps. CXI. and Ps. CXII.

preceding verse. "Righteousness" (the mirror of the goodness of God in the soul of man) "endureth." For the work of God and His laws are everlasting, whereas the "desire of the wicked" (the work of mortal man) "perisheth."

Verses 9 and 10 are in fact an expression of fervent faith in the power of good over evil—a parallel thought to "Magna est veritas et prevalebit."

PSALM CXIII.

PRAISE ye the LORD. Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD. 2 Blessed be the name of the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. 3 From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the LORD'S name is to be praised. 4 The LORD is high above all nations, and His glory above the heavens. 5 Who is like unto the LORD our God, Who dwelleth on high, 6 Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth! 7 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill; 8 That He may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people. 9 He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD.

Note on Ps. CXIII.

The series of Psalms of Praise, beginning with the 113th and ending with the 118th Psalm, are used in the Jewish Ritual as a special service of praise

One might paraphrase the picture of a good man's courage in verses 7 and 8, thus :— Note on Ps. CXI. and Ps. CXII.

"Evil tidings he may hear,
Yet he feeleth nought of fear.
His heart is firm, his heart is fast,
Through trust in God all fear is cast.
No timid doubts perturb his calm,
Lest fate or fault may bring him harm."

CXIII. קיג

הַלְלוּ־יָהּ | הַלְלוּ עַבְדֵי יְהוָה הַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה׃
2 יְהִי שֵׁם יְהוָה מְבֹרָךְ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם׃
3 מִמִּזְרַח־שֶׁמֶשׁ עַד־מְבוֹאוֹ מְהֻלָּל שֵׁם יְהוָה׃
4 רָם עַל־כָּל־גּוֹיִם | יְהוָה עַל הַשָּׁמַיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ׃
5 מִי כַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַמַּגְבִּיהִי לָשָׁבֶת׃ 6 הַמַּשְׁפִּילִי
לִרְאוֹת בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ׃ 7 מְקִימִי מֵעָפָר דָּל מֵאַשְׁפּוֹת
יָרִים אֶבְיוֹן׃ 8 לְהוֹשִׁיבִי עִם־נְדִיבִים עִם נְדִיבֵי עַמּוֹ׃
9 מוֹשִׁיבִי | עֲקֶרֶת הַבַּיִת אֵם־הַבָּנִים שְׂמֵחָה הַלְלוּ־יָהּ׃

for the Holydays, and are called the Hallel (from הלל, "to praise"). Note on Ps. CXIII.

On the seventh day of Passover, the anniversary

Note on Ps. CXIII. of the drowning of the Egyptian warriors in the Red Sea, this service of rejoicing is curtailed. In the spirit of the proverb which says, "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth," the joy of safety and liberty was tempered with the sorrow that so many human beings had met with a violent death.

The Hallel is also omitted from the service for New Year's Day and the Day of Atonement, as the leading thought on those days is one rather of solem-

PSALM CXIV.

WHEN Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language; 2 Judah was His sanctuary, and Israel His dominion. 3 The sea saw it, and fled: Jordan was driven back. 4 The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs. 5 What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back? 6 Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams; and ye little hills, like lambs? 7 Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the God of Jacob; 8 Which turned the rock into a pool of water, the flint into a fountain of waters.

Note on Ps. CXIV. *Note for Older Children.*—The 114th Psalm proclaims the might of God as shown in marvels such as the Israelites witnessed at the Red Sea and on the banks of the Jordan; but which, as some of the later verses of the Psalm imply, were

nity than of rejoicing. They are days of preparation to bear bravely and trustfully whatever trials and troubles the year may bring forth for us, and days of high resolve—to break away from whatever we see to be wrong in our ways, and to try hard to attain to goodness in all our thoughts and acts. Note on Ps. CXIII.

The 113th Psalm pictures the eternal goodness and lovingkindness of God to all human beings, high and low alike.

CXIV. קיד

בְּצֵאת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם בֵּית יַעֲקֹב מֵעַם לֹעֵז׃
2 הָיְתָה יְהוּדָה לְקָדְשׁוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל מַמְשְׁלוֹתָיו׃ 3 הַיָּם
רָאָה וַיָּנֹס הַיַּרְדֵּן יִסֹּב לְאָחוֹר׃ 4 הֶהָרִים רָקְדוּ
כְאֵילִים גְּבָעוֹת כִּבְנֵי־צֹאן׃ 5 מַה־לְּךָ הַיָּם כִּי תָנוּס
הַיַּרְדֵּן תִּסֹּב לְאָחוֹר׃ 6 הֶהָרִים תִּרְקְדוּ כְאֵילִים
גְּבָעוֹת כִּבְנֵי־צֹאן׃ 7 מִלִּפְנֵי אָדוֹן חוּלִי אָרֶץ מִלִּפְנֵי
אֱלוֹהַּ יַעֲקֹב׃ 8 הַהֹפְכִי הַצּוּר אֲגַם־מָיִם חַלָּמִישׁ
לְמַעְיְנוֹ־מָיִם׃

but a few among the wonderful events in Nature, such as earthquakes and volcanic upheavals, causing massive mountains to quiver, and rocks to crack, and springs of water to come and to vanish. Note on Ps. CXIV.

The Psalmist's vivid conception of the Infinite

Note on Ps. CXIV.

power and majesty of God leads him to realize in some measure the great world history of the globe. At epoch-making moments in the history of Israel he is comforted by the thought of the immeasurable power of God as shewn in His control of the great forces of Nature, and he pours out a series of glowing word-pictures of the marvels of the Natural world.

To most of us the sight of Nature only suggests the thought of the world as we see it now. But those who have studied its various materials have learnt to read the great silent history of creation. Mountain peaks, ice-scarred rocks, fire-wrought granite crags, waving hills taking the shape of the

PSALM CXV.

NOT unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake. 2 Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God? 3 But our God is in the heavens: He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased. 4 Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. 5 They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: 6 They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: 7 They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. 8 They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them. (*Chorus*)

9 O Israel, trust thou in the LORD: He is their help and their shield.

great ocean billows that once rolled over them, each tell their tale of the epochs of the process of creation. When this history was first discovered, by infinitely patient observation, "miracles" became better understood. Scientific study gradually revealed the marvellous processes through which the world has passed, and is always passing, in obedience to the great laws of Nature. These are so wonderful that those who study them are constantly reminded of the Infinite Wisdom of the Creator and—by realizing the fallacies to which human reasoning has so often led—of the limited wisdom of mankind.

Note on Ps. CXIV.

CXV. קטו

לֹא לָנוּ | יְהוָה לֹא לָנוּ כִּי־לְשִׁמְךָ תֵּן כָּבוֹד עַל־
חַסְדְּךָ עַל־אֲמִתֶּךָ׃ 2 לָמָּה יֹאמְרוּ הַגּוֹיִם אַיֵּה־נָא
אֱלֹהֵיהֶם׃ 3 וֵאלֹהֵינוּ בַשָּׁמָיִם כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־חָפֵץ עָשָׂה׃
4 עֲצַבֵּיהֶם כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי אָדָם׃ 5 פֶּה־לָהֶם
וְלֹא יְדַבֵּרוּ עֵינַיִם לָהֶם וְלֹא יִרְאוּ׃ 6 אָזְנַיִם לָהֶם
וְלֹא יִשְׁמָעוּ אַף לָהֶם וְלֹא יְרִיחוּן׃ 7 יְדֵיהֶם | וְלֹא
יְמִישׁוּן רַגְלֵיהֶם וְלֹא יְהַלֵּכוּ לֹא יֶהְגּוּ בִּגְרוֹנָם׃
8 כָּמוֹהֶם יִהְיוּ עֹשֵׂיהֶם כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־בֹּטֵחַ בָּהֶם׃
9 יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּטַח בַּיהוָה עֶזְרָם וּמָגִנָּם הוּא׃ 10 בֵּית

Ps. CXV.

10 O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD: He is their help and their shield.

11 Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: He is their help and their shield.

12 The LORD hath been mindful of us: He will bless us; He will bless the house of Israel; He will bless the house of Aaron. 13 He will bless them that fear the LORD, both small and great. 14 The LORD shall increase you more and more, you and your children. 15 Ye are blessed of the LORD which made heaven and earth. 16 The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD'S: but the earth hath he given to the children of men. 17 The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence. 18 But we will bless the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. Praise ye the LORD.

Note on Ps. CXV.

The first three verses of the 115th Psalm utter the thought so often expressed in all the Psalms of praise—that when the children of men are blessed, the glory is not the glory of man, but the glory of the goodness and mercy of God, and that the marvels of God's creation are ever praising Him by their wondrousness.

The Psalmist then contrasts the work of God and the work of Man.

The 9th, 10th, and 11th verses are an exhortation, not only to Israel and her priests, but to all human beings to trust in the Lord. The refrain at the end of each of these verses was evidently written to be sung by an answering chorus. Hence the use of the third person plural.

Ps. CXV.

אַהֲרֹן בְּטְחוּ בַיהוָה עֶזְרָם וּמָגִנָּם הוּא׃ 11 יִרְאֵי
יְהוָה בִּטְחוּ בַיהוָה עֶזְרָם וּמָגִנָּם הוּא׃ 12 יְהוָה
זְכָרָנוּ יְבָרֵךְ יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־בֵּית
אַהֲרֹן׃ 13 יְבָרֵךְ יִרְאֵי יְהוָה הַקְּטַנִּים עִם־הַגְּדֹלִים׃
14 יֹסֵף יְהוָה עֲלֵיכֶם עֲלֵיכֶם וְעַל־בְּנֵיכֶם׃ 15 בְּרוּכִים
אַתֶּם לַיהוָה עֹשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ׃ 16 הַשָּׁמַיִם שָׁמַיִם
לַיהוָה וְהָאָרֶץ נָתַן לִבְנֵי־אָדָם׃ 17 לֹא־הַמֵּתִים
יְהַלְלוּ־יָהּ וְלֹא כָּל־יֹרְדֵי דוּמָה׃ 18 וַאֲנַחְנוּ | נְבָרֵךְ
יָהּ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם הַלְלוּ־יָהּ׃

Note on Ps. CXV

Bearing in mind that the expression, "they that fear the Lord," conveys the thought not of cowardly fear but of awe and reverence, we realize the broad spirit that breathes through the Psalm, invoking and declaring trustfulness in the Divine lovingkindness of God towards all the children of men.

The last six verses teem with the characteristic spirit of Judaism. No mystic theory is woven to guide mankind to a trust in the goodness of God and to make that goodness an ever-present and ever-guiding thought to the living children of man, to whom God has given the earth for a dwelling-place. But the Psalmist exhorts all mankind to be constantly giving thanks and praise to God by ever striving to live in the image of His goodness.

PSALM CXVI.

I LOVE the LORD, because He hath heard my voice and my supplications. 2 Because He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live. 3 The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of the grave gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. 4 Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. 5 Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. 6 The LORD preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and He helped me. 7 Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee. 8 For Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. 9 I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living. 10 I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted: 11 I said in my haste, All men are liars.

12 What shall I render unto the LORD for all His benefits toward me? 13 I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. 14 I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all His people. 15 Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints. 16 O LORD, truly I am Thy servant; I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine handmaid: Thou hast loosed my bonds. 17 I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD. 18 I will

CXVI. קיו

אָהַבְתִּי כִּי־יִשְׁמַע | יְהוָה אֶת־קוֹלִי תַּחֲנוּנָי׃ 2 כִּי־
הִטָּה אָזְנוֹ לִי וּבְיָמַי אֶקְרָא׃ 3 אֲפָפֻנִי | חֶבְלֵי־מָוֶת
וּמְצָרֵי שְׁאוֹל מְצָאוּנִי צָרָה וְיָגוֹן אֶמְצָא׃ 4 וּבְשֵׁם־
יְהוָה אֶקְרָא אָנָּה יְהוָה מַלְּטָה נַפְשִׁי׃ 5 חַנּוּן יְהוָה
וְצַדִּיק וֵאלֹהֵינוּ מְרַחֵם׃ 6 שֹׁמֵר פְּתָאיִם יְהוָה דַּלֹּתִי
וְלִי יְהוֹשִׁיעַ׃ 7 שׁוּבִי נַפְשִׁי לְמְנוּחָיְכִי כִּי יְהוָה גָּמַל
עָלָיְכִי׃ 8 כִּי חִלַּצְתָּ | נַפְשִׁי מִמָּוֶת אֶת־עֵינִי מִן־דִּמְעָה
אֶת־רַגְלִי מִדֶּחִי׃ 9 אֶתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה בְּאַרְצוֹת
הַחַיִּים׃ 10 הֶאֱמַנְתִּי כִּי אֲדַבֵּר אֲנִי עָנִיתִי מְאֹד׃
11 אֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי בְחָפְזִי כָּל־הָאָדָם כֹּזֵב׃ 12 מָה־
אָשִׁיב לַיהוָה כָּל־תַּגְמוּלוֹהִי עָלָי׃ 13 כּוֹס־יְשׁוּעוֹת
אֶשָּׂא וּבְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא׃ 14 נְדָרַי לַיהוָה אֲשַׁלֵּם
נֶגְדָּה־נָּא לְכָל־עַמּוֹ׃ 15 יָקָר בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה הַמָּוְתָה
לַחֲסִידָיו׃ 16 אָנָּה יְהוָה כִּי־אֲנִי עַבְדֶּךָ אֲנִי עַבְדְּךָ
בֶּן־אֲמָתֶךָ פִּתַּחְתָּ לְמוֹסֵרָי׃ 17 לְךָ־אֶזְבַּח זֶבַח תּוֹדָה
וּבְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא׃ 18 נְדָרַי לַיהוָה אֲשַׁלֵּם נֶגְדָּה־

Ps. CXVI. pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all His people, 19 In the courts of the LORD'S house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

Note on Ps. CXVI. In the 116th Psalm the poet utters a personal prayer. He tells of his own suffering and misery, and then in the passage ending with the poetic words, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee," he tells of the comfort that came to him from prayer.

He describes his bitterness of feeling towards his fellow-creatures when he is soured by misfortune—and how that bitterness is obliterated by his overwhelming sense of gratitude to God. "I believed, therefore will I declare. I was greatly afflicted. I said in my haste, All men are liars."

Perhaps no moral exhortation ever spoken brings more forcibly home to our minds the wrong of judging our fellow-creatures uncharitably. Embittered by his own woes, the Psalmist speaks bitterly of all men. But when he is in a calmer frame of mind,—when his soul has returned to its rest, he repents of his hasty judgment. When we find ourselves judging others uncharitably, we too should all do well to consider whether it may not be the folly within ourselves that we know not of, which colours our view of others.

This Psalm is a soliloquy, and each emotion that seizes the poet is alluded to rather than described. But his thoughts and feelings are so natural to us all that we can easily follow them, and fill in the gaps.

He feels that even if his sufferings had ended in death they had not been in vain. He is ready to cry in the spirit of another Psalmist, "I

Ps. CXVI. נָּא לְכָל־עַמּוֹ׃ 19 בְּחַצְרוֹת | בֵּית יְהוָה בְּתוֹכֵכִי
יְרוּשָׁלָם הַלְלוּ־יָהּ׃

know, O Lord, that Thy judgments are right, and Thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me." He will be ever loyal to his belief in the goodness of God. "O Lord, truly I am Thy servant." He, "the son of Thine hand-maiden," the inheritor by birthright of the Divine message of the Unity and Goodness of God, will proclaim to his brethren his faith, his gratitude, and his trust in God, and he will proclaim them in the courts of the Lord's house, in the Temple where burned the beacon of pure religion. Note on Ps. CXVI.

The true meaning of prayer, the communion of man with God, comes to us in this Psalm. It is not mere asking for that which we desire should happen. As a great preacher once said, "If *that* were the meaning of prayer, the street beggar might well pray, 'O Lord, may the next passer-by give me eighteen pence.'"

But we lay our prayers before God in the spirit of asking for help in our efforts to try to be worthy of having our desires fulfilled, and to try to act worthily, whatever trials may befall us.

Prayer is the act of throwing our mind and soul into the loftiest mood of which they are capable, trying to view our aims, hopes, and actions by something as near to the light of the Divine Judgment as we can attain to, and then praying for strength to maintain that attitude amid the daily incidents of life, be they joys or sorrows, work or play. Whether winning our heart's desire or losing it, whether in health or in sickness, the attitude of

Note on Ps. CXVI. our mind in prayer is to trust in the justice, and wisdom, and lovingkindness of God, to "be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord," * as David both said and *did*, all through his eventful life.

David's prayerful attitude gave him courage to slay the lion and the bear, and to face the giant warrior. It gave him the serene hopefulness that made him say, when he was a homeless outlaw in constant danger of his life by reason of the unjust enmity of King Saul, "I will bless the Lord at *all* times." And when he knew he had done wrong, the

* Psalm xxxi.

PSALM CXVII.

O PRAISE the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. 2. For His merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD.

Note on Ps. CXVII. No one is too little or too young to praise God—for He is merciful to us *all*.

When the Psalmist says, "Praise the Lord," he means praise Him by trying to be good and to be

PSALM CXVIII.

(*Chorus.*) O GIVE thanks unto the LORD: for He is good: because His mercy endureth for ever. 2 Let Israel now say, that His mercy endureth for ever. 3 Let the house of Aaron now say, that His

same prayerful attitude gave him courage to confess his sins to God and to pray for forgiveness, in the devout, humble, and noble spirit of true repentance. "Hide Thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me." *

Note on Ps. CXVI.

Such is the spirit begotten by prayer; true heroism, moral courage blended with physical courage, and both upheld by perfect faith in the infinite righteousness and mercy of God.

* Psalm li. 9, 10, 11.

CXVII. קיז

הַלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה כָּל־גּוֹיִם שַׁבְּחוּהוּ כָּל־הָאֻמִּים׃
כִּי גָבַר עָלֵינוּ חַסְדּוֹ וֶאֱמֶת־יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם הַלְלוּיָהּ׃

useful, and so to make the best use of God's wonderful gifts to us all of hearts that can *love*, and minds that can *think*, and bodies that can *do*.

Note on Ps. CXVII.

CXVIII. קיח

הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי־טוֹב כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ׃ יֹאמַר־נָא
יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ׃ יֹאמְרוּ־נָא בֵּית אַהֲרֹן

Ps. CXVIII. mercy endureth for ever. 4 Let them now that fear the LORD say, that His mercy endureth for ever.

5 I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place. 6 The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me? 7 The LORD taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me.

(*Chorus.*) 8 It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. 9 It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes.

10 All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I destroy them. 11 They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them. 12 They compassed me about like bees; they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the LORD I will destroy them. 13 Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall: but the LORD helped me. 14 The LORD is my strength and song, and is become my salvation.

(*Chorus.*) 15 The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly. 16 The right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

17 I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD. 18 The LORD hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death.

כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ׃ 4 יֹאמְרוּ־נָא יִרְאֵי יְהוָה כִּי לְעוֹלָם Ps. CXVIII.
חַסְדּוֹ׃ 5 מִן־הַמֵּצַר קָרָאתִי יָהּ עָנָנִי בַמֶּרְחָב יָהּ׃
6 יְהוָה לִי לֹא אִירָא מַה־יַּעֲשֶׂה לִי אָדָם׃ 7 יְהוָה
לִי בְּעֹזְרָי וַאֲנִי אֶרְאֶה בְשֹׂנְאָי׃ 8 טוֹב לַחֲסוֹת
בַּיהוָה מִבְּטֹחַ בָּאָדָם׃ 9 טוֹב לַחֲסוֹת בַּיהוָה מִבְּטֹחַ
בִּנְדִיבִים׃ 10 כָּל־גּוֹיִם סְבָבוּנִי בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אֲמִילַם׃
11 סַבּוּנִי גַם־סְבָבוּנִי בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אֲמִילַם׃ 12 סַבּוּנִי
כִדְבֹרִים דֹּעֲכוּ כְּאֵשׁ קוֹצִים בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אֲמִילַם׃
13 דָּחֹה דְּחִיתַנִי לִנְפֹּל וַיהוָה עֲזָרָנִי׃ 14 עָזִּי וְזִמְרָת
יָהּ וַיְהִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה׃ 15 קוֹל ו רִנָּה וִישׁוּעָה בְּאָהֳלֵי
צַדִּיקִים יְמִין יְהוָה עֹשָׂה חָיִל׃ 16 יְמִין יְהוָה
רוֹמֵמָה יְמִין יְהוָה עֹשָׂה חָיִל׃ 17 לֹא־אָמוּת כִּי־
אֶחְיֶה וַאֲסַפֵּר מַעֲשֵׂי יָהּ׃ 18 יַסֹּר יִסְּרַנִּי יָהּ וְלַמָּוֶת

Ps. CXVIII. 19 Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go into them, and I will praise the LORD:

(*Chorus.*) 20 This is the gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter.

21 I will praise Thee: for Thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.

(*Chorus.*) 22 The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. 23 This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. 24 This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

25 Save now, I beseech Thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech Thee, send now prosperity.

(*Chorus.*) 26 Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD. 27 God is the LORD, which hath showed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.

28 Thou art my God, and I will praise Thee: Thou art my God, I will exalt Thee.

(*Chorus.*) 29 O give thanks unto the LORD; for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever.

Note on Ps. CXVIII. This is the last Psalm of the Service of Songs called the Hallel, and seems to gather up the threads of them all.

The chorus verses of Psalm cxv. (verses 9, 10, 11,) are echoed and emphasized in the opening chorus of Psalm cxviii. (verses 1, 2, 3, 4).

Ps. CXVIII.

לֹא נִתָּנָנִי׃ 19 פִּתְחוּ־לִי שַׁעֲרֵי־צֶדֶק אָבֹא־בָם אוֹדֶה
יָהּ׃ 20 זֶה־הַשַּׁעַר לַיהוָה צַדִּיקִים יָבֹאוּ בוֹ׃ 21 אוֹדְךָ
כִּי עֲנִיתָנִי וַתְּהִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה׃ 22 אֶבֶן מָאֲסוּ הַבּוֹנִים
הָיְתָה לְרֹאשׁ פִּנָּה׃ 23 מֵאֵת יְהוָה הָיְתָה זֹּאת הִיא
נִפְלָאת בְּעֵינֵינוּ׃ 24 זֶה־הַיּוֹם עָשָׂה יְהוָה נָגִילָה וְנִשְׂמְחָה
בוֹ׃ 25 אָנָּא יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעָה נָּא אָנָּא יְהוָה
הַצְלִיחָה* נָּא׃ 26 בָּרוּךְ הַבָּא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה בֵּרַכְנוּכֶם
מִבֵּית יְהוָה׃ 27 אֵל | יְהוָה וַיָּאֶר לָנוּ אִסְרוּ־חַג בַּעֲבֹתִים
עַד קַרְנוֹת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ׃ 28 אֵלִי אַתָּה וְאוֹדֶךָּ אֱלֹהַי
אֲרוֹמְמֶךָּ׃ 29 הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי־טוֹב כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ׃

Note on Ps. CXVIII.

Then as in Psalm cxvi. the poet pours out the inmost feelings of his own soul. Each time that he recounts how, in all woe and trouble, he has ever been strengthened and comforted by his trust in God, the chorus takes up his thought and repeats it with every-varying imagery.

Note on Ps. CXVIII.

Those who have passed through dark times of misery to renewed happiness know the feeling that inspires the song of hope and thanksgiving in verses 17, 18, and 19. The thought that to try and do right is the true way to offer praise to God (expressed in the 117th Psalm) is reiterated in the imagery of the 19th and 20th verses of the 118th Psalm.

The 22nd verse is a prophetic utterance of a profound historic truth, and breathes that spirit of undaunted sturdy faith which has preserved Judaism throughout the ages, while many great Empires have risen, fallen, and become obliterated. It is also a message of encouragement to us all. If we do our work in life faithfully and to the best of our power, however small the result of our labours—however much all our efforts may seem to have been made in

PSALM CXIX.

Note on Ps. CXIX.

Psalm cxix., the longest of all the Psalms, is another alphabetic poem.* It is divided into twenty-two cantos, each containing eight verses beginning with the same letter, and the initial letters of the successive cantos follow the order of the alphabet. Thus the eight verses of the first canto begin with Aleph, א; the eight verses of the second canto with Beth, ב; and so on.

There is a certain literary ingenuity, a knack of playing with words that all poets possess. It finds expression in rhymes, imitative harmony, alliteration

* The alphabetic Psalms are the 25th, 34th and 145th, of which each verse begins with the successive letters of the alphabet in their alphabetical order; the 37th, every alternate verse of which begins with the letters in alphabetical order, the 111th and 112th, of which every half verse begins with the successive letters in alphabetical order, and the 119th Psalm.

vain—we may comfort ourselves with the thought that God knows and accepts the offering of our honest toil. The idea of the 22nd verse is the topic of many great literary masterpieces—not the least beautiful of which is Hans Andersen's tale of the "Ugly Duckling." Note on Ps. CXVIII.

This Psalm was probably meant to be sung by a procession of priests while ascending the steps of the Temple. As they came near the door of the Temple they sang verse 20. The huge blocks of unhewn stone of which the Temple was built (one can yet see them among the ruins of the Temple in Jerusalem) lent a double meaning to verse 22. The prayer of verse 25 is answered from within the Temple by the impressive blessing of verse 26, and the Psalm ends with a repetition of the familiar opening verse, the keynote of so many beautiful Psalms.

CXIX. קוֹף

and other "jeux d'esprit" among the western poets. Southey's "Cataract of Lodore" is one of the best English examples of this playful exercise of literary aptitude. Shakespear sometimes winds up a passage in blank verse with a pithy set of rhymes.* But rhyming was probably an unknown art to the Psalmists, and, indeed, Hebrew does not lend itself very well to rhyme. Though the later Hebrew poets made use of it, the early Hebrew poets, the authors of the Psalms, used their literary ingenuity in other ways, such as making alphabetical poems like these Psalms. Note on Ps. CXIX.

Perhaps the alphabetic form was also used as a help to memory. It is difficult now to realize that

* For example, Henry IV., Act i., Sc. 3: Merchant of Venice, Act iii., Sc. 2; and As You Like It, Act iii., Sc. 2.

Note on Ps. CXIX. memory was in great measure the library of the ancients, and in order to possess a book they had either to write a copy of it themselves or to learn it by heart. This circumstance seems to make one understand better the intensity and minuteness with which every word of the Law is studied and analyzed

א

ALEPH.

HAPPY are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD. 2 Happy are they that keep His testimonies; they seek Him with the whole heart. 3 They also do no iniquity: they walk in His ways. 4 Thou hast commanded us to keep Thy precepts diligently. 5 O that my ways were directed to keep Thy statutes! 6 Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all Thy commandments. 7 I will praise Thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned Thy righteous judgments. 8 I will keep Thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly.

Note on א CANTO Aleph (א) describes the happiness and the help to right conduct that comes of obedience to God's laws, and it ends with a protestation and a

ב

BETH.

(1) 9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to Thy word.
(2) 10 With my whole heart have I sought Thee: O let
(3) me not wander from Thy commandments. 11 Thy

and commented on in the Talmud. The reviewer of those days had to know his subject by heart! Note on Ps. CXIX.

The theme of the Psalm is the all-sufficing guidance of the law, and the all-sufficing comfort of trustful prayer to God. Simple, fervid loyalty to God and impetuous, whole-hearted frankness pervade the whole poem.

א

אַשְׁרֵי תְמִימֵי־דָרֶךְ הַהֹלְכִים בְּתוֹרַת יְהוָה׃ 2 אַשְׁרֵי
נֹצְרֵי עֵדֹתָיו בְּכָל־לֵב יִדְרְשׁוּהוּ׃ 3 אַף לֹא־פָעֲלוּ
עַוְלָה בִּדְרָכָיו הָלָכוּ׃ 4 אַתָּה צִוִּיתָה פִקֻּדֶיךָ לִשְׁמֹר
מְאֹד׃ 5 אַחֲלַי יִכֹּנוּ דְרָכָי לִשְׁמֹר חֻקֶּיךָ׃ 6 אָז לֹא־
אֵבוֹשׁ בְּהַבִּיטִי אֶל־כָּל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ׃ 7 אוֹדְךָ בְיֹשֶׁר
לֵבָב בְּלָמְדִי מִשְׁפְּטֵי צִדְקֶךָ׃ 8 אֶת־חֻקֶּיךָ אֶשְׁמֹר
אַל־תַּעַזְבֵנִי עַד־מְאֹד׃

prayer. "I will keep Thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly." Note on א

ב

9 בַּמֶּה יְזַכֶּה־נַּעַר אֶת־אָרְחוֹ לִשְׁמֹר כִּדְבָרֶךָ׃
10 בְּכָל־לִבִּי דְרַשְׁתִּיךָ אַל־תַּשְׁגֵּנִי מִמִּצְוֹתֶיךָ׃ 11 בְּלִבִּי

Ps. CXIX. word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin
(4) against Thee. 12 Blessed art Thou, O LORD: teach
(5) me Thy statutes. 13 With my lips have I declared
all the judgments of Thy mouth. 14 I have rejoiced
(6) in the way of Thy testimonies, as much as in all
(7) riches. 15 I will meditate in Thy precepts, and have
respect unto Thy ways. 16 I will delight myself in
(8) Thy statutes: I will not forget Thy word.

Note on ב CANTO Beth (ב) opens with a question. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" Every one of us should daily call to mind, before beginning the detail work of life that each day brings us, the lofty

ג

GIMEL.

(1) 17 Deal bountifully with Thy servant, that I may
(2) live, and keep Thy word. 18 Open Thou mine
eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy
(3) law. 19 I am a stranger in the earth: hide not
(4) Thy commandments from me. 20 My soul breaketh
for the longing that it hath unto Thy judgments at
(5) all times. 21 Thou hast rebuked the proud that are
cursed, which do err from Thy commandments.
(6) 22 Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I
(7) have kept Thy testimonies. 23 Princes also did sit
and speak against me: but Thy servant did meditate
(8) in Thy statutes. 24 Thy testimonies also are my
delight and my counsellors.

Note on ג CANTO Gimel (ג) expresses the Psalmist's longing for a sense of communion with God, and for full understanding of the Divine Laws.

Ps. CXIX

צָבַנְתִּי אִמְרָתֶךָ לְמַעַן לֹא אֶחֱטָא־לָךְ׃ 12 בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה
יְהוָה לַמְּדֵנִי חֻקֶּיךָ׃ 13 בִּשְׂפָתַי סִפַּרְתִּי כֹּל מִשְׁפְּטֵי־
פִיךָ׃ 14 בְּדֶרֶךְ עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ שַׂשְׂתִּי כְּעַל כָּל־הוֹן׃
15 בְּפִקּוּדֶיךָ אָשִׂיחָה וְאַבִּיטָה אֹרְחֹתֶיךָ׃ 16 בְּחֻקֹּתֶיךָ
אֶשְׁתַּעֲשָׁע לֹא אֶשְׁכַּח דְּבָרֶךָ׃

Note on ב

and yet practical moral standpoint of the answer: *wish* to obey God; *cherish* His laws; keep them constantly in mind; build an ideal of right conduct on them; be their staunch champion and faithful follower.

ג

17 גְּמוֹל עַל־עַבְדְּךָ אֶחְיֶה וְאֶשְׁמְרָה דְבָרֶךָ׃ 18 גַּל־
עֵינַי וְאַבִּיטָה נִפְלָאוֹת מִתּוֹרָתֶךָ׃ 19 גֵּר אָנֹכִי בָּאָרֶץ
אַל־תַּסְתֵּר מִמֶּנִּי מִצְוֹתֶיךָ׃ 20 גָּרְסָה נַפְשִׁי לְתַאֲבָה
אֶל־מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ בְכָל־עֵת׃ 21 גָּעַרְתָּ זֵדִים אֲרוּרִים
הַשֹּׁגִים מִמִּצְוֹתֶיךָ׃ 22 גַּל מֵעָלַי חֶרְפָּה וָבוּז כִּי
עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ נָצָרְתִּי׃ 23 גַּם יָשְׁבוּ שָׂרִים בִּי נִרְבָּרוּ עַבְדְּךָ
יָשִׂיחַ בְּחֻקֶּיךָ׃ 24 גַּם־עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ שַׁעֲשָׁעָי אַנְשֵׁי עֲצָתִי׃

ד

Ps. CXIX. DALETH.

(1) 25 My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken Thou
(2) me according to Thy word. 26 I have declared my ways, and Thou heardest me: teach me Thy
(3) statutes. 27 Make me to understand the way of Thy precepts: so shall I talk of Thy wondrous
(4) works. 28 My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen
(5) Thou me according unto Thy word. 29 Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me Thy law
(6) graciously. 30 I have chosen the way of truth:
(7) Thy judgments have I laid before me. 31 I have held fast unto Thy testimonies: O LORD, put me not
(8) to shame. 32 I will run the way of Thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.

Note on ד THE expression, "Quicken Thou me," in the first verse of Canto Daleth (ד) occurs many times in the 119th Psalm. It is used in the old English meaning,

ה

HÈ.

(1) 33 Teach me, O LORD, the way of Thy statutes;
(2) and I shall keep it unto the end. 34 Give me understanding, and I shall keep Thy law; yea, I
(3) shall observe it with my whole heart. 35 Make me to go in the path of Thy commandments; for therein
(4) do I delight. 36 Incline my heart unto Thy testi-
(5) monies, and not to covetousness. 37 Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; quicken Thou me in
(6) Thy way. 38 Cause Thy word to come unto Thy

ד

Ps. CXIX.

25 דָּבְקָה לֶעָפָר נַפְשִׁי חַיֵּנִי כִּדְבָרֶךָ׃ 26 דְּרָכַי
סִפַּרְתִּי וַתַּעֲנֵנִי לַמְּדֵנִי חֻקֶּיךָ׃ 27 דֶּרֶךְ־פִּקּוּדֶיךָ
הַבִינֵנִי וְאָשִׂיחָה בְּנִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ׃ 28 דָּלְפָה נַפְשִׁי מִתּוּגָה
קַיְּמֵנִי כִּדְבָרֶךָ׃ 29 דֶּרֶךְ שֶׁקֶר הָסֵר מִמֶּנִּי וְתוֹרָתְךָ
חָנֵּנִי׃ 30 דֶּרֶךְ־אֱמוּנָה בָּחָרְתִּי מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ שִׁוִּיתִי׃
31 דָּבַקְתִּי בְעֵדְוֹתֶיךָ יְהוָה אַל־תְּבִישֵׁנִי׃ 32 דֶּרֶךְ־
מִצְוֹתֶיךָ אָרוּץ כִּי תַרְחִיב לִבִּי׃

Note on ד

"grant me life," and is a prayer, not for physical life, but for that spiritual life which is the consciousness of God in the human soul.

ה

33 הוֹרֵנִי יְהוָה דֶּרֶךְ חֻקֶּיךָ וְאֶצְּרֶנָּה עֵקֶב׃
34 הֲבִינֵנִי וְאֶצְּרָה תוֹרָתֶךָ וְאֶשְׁמְרֶנָּה בְכָל־לֵב׃
35 הַדְרִיכֵנִי בִּנְתִיב מִצְוֹתֶיךָ כִּי־בוֹ חָפָצְתִּי׃ 36 הַט־
לִבִּי אֶל־עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ וְאַל אֶל־בָּצַע׃ 37 הַעֲבֵר עֵינַי
מֵרְאוֹת שָׁוְא בִּדְרָכֶיךָ חַיֵּנִי׃ 38 הָקֵם לְעַבְדְּךָ אִמְרָתֶךָ

Ps. CXIX.

(7) servant, who fears Thee. 39 Turn away my reproach which is my terror: for Thy judgments are good.

(8) 40 Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken Thou me in Thy righteousness.

Note on ה ANOTHER prayer for God's guidance towards a right understanding of His Laws, and so, of Righteousness. "Incline mine heart unto Thy testimonies and not to covetousness." The thought of God's works makes us realize His great power and the contrast of human littleness. Then we realize too God's infinite mercy towards us, and the desire arises in our hearts to show our gratitude to Him—by trying to live by the light of His goodness. Even as He is generous and compassionate to us all, so would we be generous and compassionate to our fellow creatures, and we learn to hate and despise covetousness. "Quicken Thou me," in the 5th and 8th verses of this canto bear the same meaning as in Canto ד.

"Turn thou away my reproach," means, Turn away Thy reproach of me.

ו

VAUF.

(1) 41 Let Thy mercies come also unto me, O LORD,

(2) even Thy salvation, according to Thy word. 42 So shall I have wherewith to answer him that

(3) reproacheth me: for I trust in Thy word. 43 And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth;

(4) for I have hoped in Thy judgments. 44 So shall I

(5) keep Thy law continually for ever and ever. 45 And

(6) I will walk at liberty: for I seek Thy precepts. 46 I will speak of Thy testimonies also before kings,

(7) and will not be ashamed. 47 And I will delight

Ps. CXIX.

אֲשֶׁר לְיִרְאָתֶךָ׃ 39 הַעֲבֵר חֶרְפָּתִי אֲשֶׁר יָגֹרְתִּי
כִּי מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ טוֹבִים׃ 40 הִנֵּה תָּאַבְתִּי לְפִקֻּדֶיךָ
בְּצִדְקָתְךָ חַיֵּנִי׃

Note on ה

This elliptical possessive form, which will not always bear literal translation, is often used in Hebrew. Thus in the last verse but one of Canto א the phrase translated, "when I shall have learned Thy righteous judgments," is literally, "in my learning the judgments of Thy righteousness."

Similarly, the literal translation of the end of the Second Commandment is as follows:—

"Upon the third and fourth generations of *My haters*, and showing mercy unto thousands of *My lovers* and *the keepers of* My commandments."

English Bible translation:—

"Upon the third and fourth generations of *them that hate Me*, and showing mercy unto thousands of *them that love Me and keep* My commandments."

ו

41 וְיָבֹאֻנִי חֲסָדֶיךָ יְהוָה תְּשׁוּעָתְךָ כְּאִמְרָתֶךָ׃
42 וְאֶעֱנֶה חֹרְפִי דָבָר כִּי־בָטַחְתִּי בִּדְבָרֶךָ׃ 43 וְאַל־
תַּצֵּל מִפִּי דְבַר־אֱמֶת עַד־מְאֹד כִּי לְמִשְׁפָּטֶךָ יִחָלְתִּי׃
44 וְאֶשְׁמְרָה תוֹרָתְךָ תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד׃ 45 וְאֶתְהַלְּכָה
בָרְחָבָה כִּי פִקֻּדֶיךָ דָרָשְׁתִּי׃ 46 וַאֲדַבְּרָה בְעֵדֹתֶיךָ
נֶגֶד מְלָכִים וְלֹא אֵבוֹשׁ׃ 47 וְאֶשְׁתַּעַשַׁע בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ

Ps. CXIX. myself in Thy commandments, which I have loved.
(8) 48 My hands also will I lift up unto Thy commandments, which I have loved: and I will meditate in Thy statutes.

Note on ו IN Canto Vauf (ו) the Psalmist prays for help from God, and for power to tell and show to others the strength and comfort of knowing and obeying the commandments of God.

The second verse, of which the literal meaning is,

ז

ZAIN.

(1) 49 Remember the word unto Thy servant, upon
(2) which Thou hast caused me to hope. 50 This is my comfort in my affliction: for Thy word hath
(3) quickened me. 51 The proud have had me greatly in derision: yet have I not declined from Thy law.
(4) 52 I remembered Thy judgments of old, O LORD;
(5) and have comforted myself. 53 Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake
(6) Thy law. 54 Thy statutes have been my songs in
(7) the house of my pilgrimage. 55 I have remembered Thy name, O LORD, in the night, and have kept Thy
(8) law. 56 This I had, because I kept Thy precepts.

ח

CHETH.

(1) 57 Thou art my portion, O LORD: I have said
(2) that I would keep Thy words. 58 I intreated Thy favour with my whole heart: be merciful unto me
(3) according to Thy word. 59 I thought on my ways,

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אֲשֶׁר אָהָבְתִּי׃ 48 וְאֶשָּׂא כַפַּי אֶל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר
אָהָבְתִּי וְאָשִׂיחָה בְחֻקֶּיךָ׃

Note on ו

"and I shall answer my reproacher's word, for I have trusted in Thy word," is another example of the possessive form we noticed in Cantos א and ה, which gives an epigrammatic turn to the verse, irreducible to English idiom.

ז

49 זְכָר־דָּבָר לְעַבְדֶּךָ עַל אֲשֶׁר יִחַלְתָּנִי׃ 50 זֹאת
נֶחָמָתִי בְעָנְיִי כִּי אִמְרָתְךָ חִיָּתְנִי׃ 51 זֵדִים הֱלִיצֻנִי
עַד־מְאֹד מִתּוֹרָתְךָ לֹא נָטִיתִי׃ 52 זָכַרְתִּי מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ
מֵעוֹלָם | יְהוָה וָאֶתְנֶחָם׃ 53 זַלְעָפָה אֲחָזַתְנִי מֵרְשָׁעִים
עֹזְבֵי תּוֹרָתֶךָ׃ 54 זְמִרוֹת הָיוּ־לִי חֻקֶּיךָ בְּבֵית מְגוּרָי׃
55 זָכַרְתִּי בַלַּיְלָה שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה וָאֶשְׁמְרָה תּוֹרָתֶךָ׃
56 זֹאת הָיְתָה־לִּי כִּי פִקֻּדֶיךָ נָצָרְתִּי׃

ח

57 חֶלְקִי יְהוָה אָמַרְתִּי לִשְׁמֹר דְּבָרֶיךָ׃ 58 חִלִּיתִי
פָנֶיךָ בְכָל־לֵב חָנֵּנִי כְּאִמְרָתֶךָ׃ 59 חִשַּׁבְתִּי דְרָכָי
וָאָשִׁיבָה רַגְלַי אֶל־עֵדֹתֶיךָ׃ 60 חַשְׁתִּי וְלֹא הִתְמַהְמָהְתִּי

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(4) and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies. 60 I
made haste, and delayed not to keep Thy command-
(5) ments. 61 The bands of the wicked have robbed
(6) me: but I have not forgotten Thy law. 62 At mid-
night I will rise to give thanks unto Thee because of
(7) Thy righteous judgments. 63 I am a companion of
all them that fear Thee, and of them that keep Thy
(8) precepts. 64 The earth, O LORD, is full of Thy
mercy: teach me Thy statutes.

ט

TETH.

(1) 65 Thou hast dealt well with Thy servant, O
(2) LORD, according unto Thy word. 66 Teach me
good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed
(3) Thy commandments. 67 Before I was afflicted I
(4) went astray: but now have I kept Thy word. 68
Thou art good, and doest good; teach me Thy
(5) statutes. 69 The proud have forged a lie against
me: but I will keep Thy precepts with my whole
(6) heart. 70 Their heart is as fat as grease; but I
(7) delight in Thy law. 71 It is good for me that I
have been afflicted; that I might learn Thy statutes.
(8) 72 The law of Thy mouth is better unto me than
thousands of gold and silver.

י

JOD.

(1) 73 Thy hands have made me and fashioned me:
give me understanding, that I may learn Thy com-
(2) mandments. 74 They that fear Thee will be glad

Ps. CXIX.

לִשְׁמֹור מִצְוֹתֶיךָ . 61 חֶבְלֵי רְשָׁעִים עִוְּדֵנִי תּוֹרָתְךָ
לֹא שָׁכָחְתִּי : 62 חֲצוֹת לַיְלָה אָקוּם לְהוֹדוֹת לָךְ עַל
מִשְׁפְּטֵי צִדְקֶךָ : 63 חָבֵר אֲנִי לְכָל־אֲשֶׁר יְרֵאוּךָ
וּלְשֹׁמְרֵי פִקּוּדֶיךָ : 64 חַסְדְּךָ יְהוָה מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ
חֻקֶּיךָ לַמְּדֵנִי :

ט

65 טוֹב עָשִׂיתָ עִם־עַבְדְּךָ יְהוָה כִּדְבָרֶךָ : 66 טוּב
טַעַם וָדַעַת לַמְּדֵנִי כִּי בְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ הֶאֱמָנְתִּי : 67 טֶרֶם
אֶעֱנֶה אֲנִי שֹׁגֵג וְעַתָּה אִמְרָתְךָ שָׁמָרְתִּי : 68 טוֹב
אַתָּה וּמֵטִיב לַמְּדֵנִי חֻקֶּיךָ : 69 טָפְלוּ עָלַי שֶׁקֶר
זֵדִים אֲנִי בְּכָל־לֵב | אֶצֹּר פִּקּוּדֶיךָ : 70 טָפַשׁ כַּחֵלֶב
לִבָּם אֲנִי תּוֹרָתְךָ שִׁעֲשָׁעְתִּי : 71 טוֹב־לִי כִּי־עֻנֵּיתִי
לְמַעַן אֶלְמַד חֻקֶּיךָ : 72 טוֹב־לִי תּוֹרַת פִּיךָ מֵאַלְפֵי
זָהָב וָכָסֶף :

י

73 יָדֶיךָ עָשׂוּנִי וַיְכוֹנְנוּנִי הֲבִינֵנִי וְאֶלְמְדָה מִצְוֹתֶיךָ :
74 יְרֵאֶיךָ יִרְאוּנִי וְיִשְׂמָחוּ כִּי לִדְבָרְךָ יִחָלְתִּי :

Ps. CXIX. when they see me; because I have hoped in Thy
(3) word. 75 I know, O LORD, that Thy judgments
are right, and that Thou in faithfulness hast afflicted
(4) me. 76 Let, I pray thee, Thy merciful kindness be
for my comfort, according to Thy word unto Thy
(5) servant. 77 Let Thy tender mercies come unto me,
(6) that I may live: for Thy law is my delight. 78 Let
the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely
with me without a cause: but I will meditate in Thy
(7) precepts. 79 Let those that fear Thee turn unto
me, and those that have known Thy testimonies.
(8) 80 Let my heart be sound in Thy statutes; that I
be not ashamed.

כ

CAPH.

(1) 81 My soul fainteth for Thy salvation: but I hope
(2) in Thy word. 82 Mine eyes fail for Thy word,
(3) saying, When wilt Thou comfort me? 83 For I
am become like a bottle in the smoke; yet do I not
(4) forget Thy statutes. 84 How many are the days of
Thy servant? when wilt Thou execute judgment on
(5) them that persecute me? 85 The proud have
digged pits for me, which are not after Thy law.
(6) 86 All Thy commandments are faithful: they
(7) persecute me wrongfully; help Thou me. 87 They
had almost consumed me upon earth; but I forsook
(8) not Thy precepts. 88 Quicken me after Thy loving-
kindness; so shall I keep the testimony of Thy
mouth.

75 יָדַעְתִּי יְהוָה כִּי־צֶדֶק מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ וֶאֱמוּנָה עִנִּיתָנִי׃
76 יְהִי־נָא חַסְדְּךָ לְנַחֲמֵנִי כְּאִמְרָתְךָ לְעַבְדֶּךָ׃
77 יְבֹאוּנִי רַחֲמֶיךָ וְאֶחְיֶה כִּי תוֹרָתְךָ שַׁעֲשֻׁעָי׃
78 יֵבֹשׁוּ זֵדִים כִּי־שֶׁקֶר עִוְּתוּנִי אֲנִי אָשִׂיחַ בְּפִקּוּדֶיךָ׃
79 יָשׁוּבוּ־לִי יְרֵאֶיךָ וְיֹדְעוֵ֥י עֵדֹתֶיךָ׃ 80 יְהִי־לִבִּי
תָמִים בְּחֻקֶּיךָ לְמַעַן לֹא אֵבוֹשׁ׃

כ

81 כָּלְתָה לִתְשׁוּעָתְךָ נַפְשִׁי לִדְבָרְךָ יִחָלְתִּי׃ 82 כָּלוּ
עֵינַי לְאִמְרָתֶךָ לֵאמֹר מָתַי תְּנַחֲמֵנִי׃ 83 כִּי־הָיִיתִי
כְּנֹאד בְּקִיטוֹר חֻקֶּיךָ לֹא שָׁכָחְתִּי׃ 84 כַּמָּה יְמֵי עַבְדֶּךָ
מָתַי תַּעֲשֶׂה בְרֹדְפַי מִשְׁפָּט׃ 85 כָּרוּ־לִי זֵדִים שִׁיחוֹת
אֲשֶׁר לֹא כְתוֹרָתֶךָ׃ 86 כָּל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ אֱמוּנָה שֶׁקֶר
רָדָפוּנִי עָזְרֵנִי׃ 87 כִּמְעַט כִּלּוּנִי בָאָרֶץ וַאֲנִי לֹא־
עָזַבְתִּי פִקֻּדֶיךָ׃ 88 כְּחַסְדְּךָ חַיֵּנִי וְאֶשְׁמְרָה עֵדוּת פִּיךָ׃

Note on ז ח ט י כ

CANTOS *Zain* (ז), Cheth (ח), Teth (ט), Jod (י), and Caph (כ), are the meditations of one who is starting on his career determined to obey God's laws through all trials and difficulties. When troubles gather thick around him, he learns to understand that affliction stimulates our consciousness of the Power above and beyond us, and strengthens our faith in God. "It is good for me that I have been afflicted that I might learn Thy statutes."

ל

LAMED.

(1) 89 For ever, O LORD, Thy word is settled in
(2) heaven. 90 Thy faithfulness is unto all generations:
Thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.
(3) 91 They continue this day according to Thine
(4) ordinances: for all are Thy servants. 92 Unless
Thy law had been my delights, I should then have
(5) perished in mine affliction. 93 I will never forget
Thy precepts: for with them Thou hast quickened
(6) me. 94 I am Thine, save me; for I have sought
(7) Thy precepts. 95 The wicked have waited for me
to destroy me: but I will consider Thy testimonies.
(8) 96 I have seen an end of all perfection: but Thy
commandment is exceeding broad.

Note on ל

CANTO Lamed (ל) expresses the lofty and peace-giving thought of the unalterable Divine laws and Divine goodness over-riding all evil, and comforting all who trust in God. The canto ends with the

Note on זחטיכ

The expression used in the first and second verses of Canto כ (the same verb in Hebrew, though translated "fainteth" in the first verse and "faileth" in the second) is a figure of speech meaning to pine away with excessive desire, the sickness of an overwhelming longing. It occurs again in a later canto (ע).

ל

89 לְעוֹלָם יְהוָה דְּבָרְךָ נִצָּב בַּשָּׁמָיִם: 90 לְדֹר
וָדֹר אֱמוּנָתֶךָ כּוֹנַנְתָּ אֶרֶץ וַתַּעֲמֹד: 91 לְמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ
עָמְדוּ הַיּוֹם כִּי הַכֹּל עֲבָדֶיךָ: 92 לוּלֵי תוֹרָתְךָ
שַׁעֲשֻׁעָי אָז אבַדְתִּי בְעָנְיִי: 93 לְעוֹלָם לֹא־אֶשְׁכַּח
פִּקּוּדֶיךָ כִּי־בָם חִיִּיתָנִי: 94 לְךָ־אֲנִי הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי כִּי
פִקּוּדֶיךָ דָרָשְׁתִּי: 95 לִי קִוּוּ רְשָׁעִים לְאַבְּדֵנִי עֵדֹתֶיךָ
אֶתְבּוֹנָן: 96 לְכָל־תִּכְלָה רָאִיתִי קֵץ רְחָבָה מִצְוָתְךָ
מְאֹד:

Note on ל

striking phrase, "I have seen an end of all perfection, but Thy commandment is exceeding broad." The Psalmist realizes that the Divine wisdom is above and beyond human understanding.

Ps. CXIX.

מ

MEM.

(1) 97 O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all
(2) the day. 98 Thou through Thy commandment
hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for it
(3) is ever with me. 99 I have more understanding
than all my teachers: for Thy testimonies are my
(4) meditation. 100 I understand more than the
(5) elders, because I keep Thy precepts. 101 I have
refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might
(6) keep Thy word. 102 I have not departed from Thy
(7) judgments: for Thou hast taught me. 103 How
sweet are Thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter
(8) than honey to my mouth! 104 Through Thy
precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every
false way.

נ

NUN.

(1) 105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light
(2) unto my path. 106 I have sworn, and I will
perform it, that I will keep Thy righteous judg-
(3) ments. 107 I am afflicted very much: quicken me
(4) O LORD, according unto Thy word. 108 Accept, I
beseech thee, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O
(5) LORD, and teach me Thy judgments. 109 My soul
is continually in my hand: yet do I not forget Thy
(6) law. 110 The wicked have laid a snare for me: yet
(7) I erred not from Thy precepts. 111 Thy testimonies

מ

Ps. CXIX.

97 מָה־אָהַבְתִּי תוֹרָתֶךָ כָּל־הַיּוֹם הִיא שִׂיחָתִי׃
98 מֵאֹיְבַי תְּחַכְּמֵנִי מִצְוֹתֶךָ כִּי לְעוֹלָם הִיא־לִי׃
99 מִכָּל־מְלַמְּדַי הִשְׂכַּלְתִּי כִּי עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ שִׂיחָה לִי׃
100 מִזְּקֵנִים אֶתְבּוֹנָן כִּי פִקּוּדֶיךָ נָצָרְתִּי׃ 101 מִכָּל־
אֹרַח רָע כָּלֵאתִי רַגְלָי לְמַעַן אֶשְׁמֹר דְּבָרֶךָ׃
102 מִמִּשְׁפָּטֶיךָ לֹא־סָרְתִּי כִּי־אַתָּה הוֹרֵתָנִי׃ 103 מַה־
נִּמְלְצוּ לְחִכִּי אִמְרָתֶךָ מִדְּבַשׁ לְפִי׃ 104 מִפִּקּוּדֶיךָ
אֶתְבּוֹנָן עַל־כֵּן שָׂנֵאתִי | כָּל־אֹרַח שָׁקֶר׃

נ

105 נֵר־לְרַגְלִי דְּבָרֶךָ וְאוֹר לִנְתִיבָתִי׃ 106 נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי
וָאֲקַיֵּמָה לִשְׁמֹר מִשְׁפְּטֵי צִדְקֶךָ׃ 107 נַעֲנֵיתִי עַד־מְאֹד
יְהוָה חַיֵּנִי כִדְבָרֶךָ׃ 108 נִדְבוֹת פִּי רְצֵה־נָא יְהוָה
וּמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ לַמְּדֵנִי׃ 109 נַפְשִׁי בְכַפִּי תָמִיד וְתוֹרָתְךָ
לֹא שָׁכָחְתִּי׃ 110 נָתְנוּ רְשָׁעִים פַּח לִי וּמִפִּקּוּדֶיךָ
לֹא תָעִיתִי׃ 111 נָחַלְתִּי עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ לְעוֹלָם כִּי־שְׂשׂוֹן

Ps. CXIX. have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are
(8) the rejoicing of my heart. 112 I have inclined mine heart to perform Thy statutes alway, even unto the end.

ס

SAMECH.

(1) 113 Doubters I hate: but Thy law do I love.
(2) 114 Thou art my hiding place and my shield: I
(3) hope in Thy word. 115 Depart from me, ye evil-doers: for I will keep the commandments of my
(4) God. 116 Uphold me according unto Thy word, that I may live: and let me not be disappointed of
(5) my hope. 117 Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto Thy statutes
(6) continually. 118 Thou hast set at nought all them that err from Thy statutes: for their deceit is false-
(7) hood. 119 Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross: therefore I love Thy testimonies.
(8) 120 My flesh trembleth for fear of Thee; and I am afraid of Thy judgments.

Note on מ נ ס CANTOS Mem (מ), Nun (נ) and Samech (ס) declare the wisdom and the strength that come to us by studying the laws of God. Have you ever tried on a dark night to make your way step by step along a track by the light of a lantern held just in front of your feet? If so you will better realize the meaning conveyed by the imagery of the first verse of Canto ג. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." We may be tempted at times to do

Ps. CXIX.

לִבִּי הֵמָּה׃ 112 נָטִיתִי לִבִּי לַעֲשׂוֹת חֻקֶּיךָ לְעוֹלָם
עֵקֶב׃

ס

113 סֵעֲפִים שָׂנֵאתִי וְתוֹרָתְךָ אָהָבְתִּי׃ 114 סִתְרִי
וּמָגִנִּי אָתָּה לִדְבָרְךָ יִחָלְתִּי׃ 115 סוּרוּ מִמֶּנִּי מְרֵעִים
וְאֶצְּרָה מִצְוֹת אֱלֹהָי׃ 116 סָמְכֵנִי כְאִמְרָתְךָ וְאֶחְיֶה
וְאַל־תְּבִישֵׁנִי מִשִּׂבְרִי׃ 117 סְעָדֵנִי וְאִוָּשֵׁעָה וְאֶשְׁעָה
בְחֻקֶּיךָ תָמִיד׃ 118 סָלִיתָ כָּל־שׁוֹגִים מֵחֻקֶּיךָ כִּי־
שֶׁקֶר תַּרְמִיתָם׃ 119 סִיגִים הִשְׁבַּתָּ כָל־רִשְׁעֵי־אָרֶץ
לָכֵן אָהַבְתִּי עֵדֹתֶיךָ׃ 120 סָמַר מִפַּחְדְּךָ בְשָׂרִי
וּמִמִּשְׁפָּטֶיךָ יָרֵאתִי׃

Note on מ נ ס

wrong in order to get something that we very much want. But there is just one right path of conduct, and the law of God is the light that guides us along it. If we stick to that light, instead of letting our thoughts pass into the darkness of doubt and temptation, we shall be guided on the right path of conduct, as surely as the wayfarer's lantern guides him safely through the darkness of the night.

Ps. CXIX. ע

AÏN.

(1) 121 I have done judgment and justice: leave me
(2) not to mine oppressors. 122 Be surety for Thy
servant for good: let not the proud oppress me.
(3) 123 Mine eyes fail for Thy salvation, and for the
(4) word of Thy righteousness. 124 Deal with Thy
servant according unto Thy mercy, and teach me
(5) Thy statutes. 125 I am Thy servant; give me
understanding, that I may know Thy testimonies.
(6) 126 It is time for Thee, LORD, to work: for they have
(7) made void Thy law. 127 Therefore I love Thy
commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold.
(8) 128 Therefore I esteem all Thy precepts concerning
all things to be right; and I hate every false way.

Note on ע CANTO Aïn (ע) is a prayer for two kinds of help. First the Psalmist prays to be saved from the oppression of man. Then he utters a prayer of overwhelming longing for help to his own soul. The

פ

PE.

(1) 129 Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth
(2) my soul obey them. 130 The entrance of Thy
words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the
(3) simple. 131 I opened my mouth, and panted: for I
(4) longed for Thy commandments. 132 Look Thou
upon me, and be merciful unto me, as Thou usest to
(5) do unto those that love Thy name. 133 Order my

ע

Ps. CXIX.

121 עָשִׂיתִי מִשְׁפָּט וָצֶדֶק בַּל־תַּנִּיחֵנִי לְעֹשְׁקָי׃
122 עָרַב עַבְדְּךָ לְטוֹב אַל־יַעַשְׁקֻנִי זֵדִים׃ 123 עֵינַי כָּלוּ
לִישׁוּעָתֶךָ וּלְאִמְרַת צִדְקֶךָ׃ 124 עֲשֵׂה עִם־עַבְדְּךָ
כְּחַסְדֶּךָ וְחֻקֶּיךָ לַמְּדֵנִי׃ 125 עַבְדְּךָ אָנִי הֲבִינֵנִי
וְאֵדְעָה עֵדֹתֶיךָ׃ 126 עֵת לַעֲשׂוֹת לַיהוָה הֵפֵרוּ
תוֹרָתֶךָ׃ 127 עַל־כֵּן אָהַבְתִּי מִצְוֹתֶיךָ מִזָּהָב וּמִפָּז׃
128 עַל־כֵּן | כָּל־פִּקּוּדֵי כֹל יִשָּׁרְתִּי כָּל־אֹרַח שֶׁקֶר
שָׂנֵאתִי׃

Note on ע

last two verses—declaring his loving and loyal faith in God's ruling—shew that the earnestness of his prayer has gone far towards bringing about its fulfilment.

פ

129 פְּלָאוֹת עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ עַל־כֵּן נְצָרָתַם נַפְשִׁי׃ 130 פֵּתַח־
דְּבָרֶיךָ יָאִיר מֵבִין פְּתָיִים׃ 131 פִּי פָעַרְתִּי וָאֶשְׁאָפָה
כִּי לְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ יָאָבְתִּי׃ 132 פְּנֵה־אֵלַי וְחָנֵּנִי כְּמִשְׁפָּט
לְאֹהֲבֵי שְׁמֶךָ׃ 133 פְּעָמַי הָכֵן בְּאִמְרָתֶךָ וְאַל־תַּשְׁלֶט־

Ps. CXIX. steps in Thy word: and let not any iniquity have
(6) dominion over me. 134 Deliver me from the
(7) oppression of man: so will I keep Thy precepts.
135 Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant; and
(8) teach me Thy statutes. 136 Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not Thy law.

Note on ב The first three verses are a poem in praise of the Law, the next four verses are a prayer for help in the effort to live according to its precepts; the concluding verse is the Psalmist's lament when he sees the law of God neglected and forgotten.

The second verse suffers in translation, owing to the fewness of English words to express the idea of imparting wisdom. "It giveth understanding" is a

צ

TZADDI.

(1) 137 Righteous art Thou, O LORD, and upright are
(2) Thy judgments. 138 Thy testimonies that Thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful.
(3) 139 My zeal hath consumed me, because mine
(4) enemies have forgotten Thy words. 140 Thy word is very pure: therefore Thy servant loveth it.
(5) 141 I am small and despised: yet do not I forget
(6) Thy precepts. 142 Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is the truth.
(7) 143 Trouble and anguish have taken hold on me:
(8) yet Thy commandments are my delights. 144 The righteousness of Thy testimonies is everlasting: give me understanding, and I shall live.

Ps. CXIX.

בִּי כָל־אָוֶן׃ 134 פְּדֵנִי מֵעֹשֶׁק אָדָם וְאֶשְׁמְרָה פִקּוּדֶיךָ׃
135 פָּנֶיךָ הָאֵר בְּעַבְדֶּךָ וְלַמְּדֵנִי אֶת־חֻקֶּיךָ׃ 136 פַּלְגֵי־
מַיִם יָרְדוּ עֵינָי עַל לֹא־שָׁמְרוּ תוֹרָתֶךָ׃

Note on פ

cumbrous though accurate equivalent to the Hebrew idea expressed in one word of four letters.

The fourth verse also loses much of its ring, the six words of the original having to be rendered by twenty English words. Here is the literal translation:—look-Thou upon-me, and-compassionate-me according-to-the-privilege-of the-lovers-of Thy-name.

צ

137 צַדִּיק אַתָּה יְהוָה וְיָשָׁר מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ׃ 138 צִוִּיתָ
צֶדֶק עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ וֶאֱמוּנָה מְאֹד׃ 139 צִמַּתַתְנִי קִנְאָתִי
כִּי־שָׁכְחוּ דְבָרֶיךָ צָרָי׃ 140 צְרוּפָה אִמְרָתְךָ מְאֹד
וְעַבְדְּךָ אֲהֵבָהּ׃ 141 צָעִיר אָנֹכִי וְנִבְזֶה פִּקֻּדֶיךָ לֹא
שָׁכָחְתִּי׃ 142 צִדְקָתְךָ צֶדֶק לְעוֹלָם וְתוֹרָתְךָ אֱמֶת׃
143 צַר־וּמָצוֹק מְצָאוּנִי מִצְוֹתֶיךָ שַׁעֲשֻׁעָי׃ 144 צֶדֶק
עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ לְעוֹלָם הֲבִינֵנִי וְאֶחְיֶה׃

Note on צ The name of the letter צ (tzaddi) means righteousness and canto tzaddi is a song of praise to the everlasting righteousness of God.

The Psalmist sees that a true understanding of God's righteousness gives life and light to the human soul. As David says in another Psalm, "The testimony of the Lord maketh wise the simple." For it is not cleverness but faith that helps us to goodness. No

ק

KOPH.

(1) 145 I cried with my whole heart; hear me, O
(2) LORD: I will keep Thy statutes. 146 I cried unto
Thee; save me, and I shall keep Thy testimonies.
(3) 147 I prevented the dawning of the morning,
(4) and cried: I hoped in Thy word. 148 Mine eyes
prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in
(5) Thy word. 149 Hear my voice according unto Thy
lovingkindness: O LORD, quicken me according to
(6) Thy judgment. 150 They draw nigh that follow
(7) after mischief: they are far from Thy law. 151 Thou
art near, O LORD; and all Thy commandments are
(8) truth. 152 Concerning Thy testimonies, I have
known of old that Thou hast founded them for ever.

ק

Note on ק CANTO Koph is a passionate prayer for help from God, a fervent expression of hope and faith.

The word "prevent" (in the third and fourth

effort of human thought can attune the human soul to such serene courage under all trouble and trial as the faith that inspires the prayer of the last verse of this canto. Note on צ

"Give me understanding of the everlasting righteousness of Thy testimonies*—and I shall live."

* The Hebrew word עֵדוּת (testimonies) has no exact counterpart in English. It conveys the double meaning of laws and acts.

ק

145 קָרָאתִי בְכָל־לֵב עֲנֵנִי יְהוָה חֻקֶּיךָ אֶצֹּרָה׃
146 קְרָאתִיךָ הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי וְאֶשְׁמְרָה עֵדֹתֶיךָ׃ 147 קִדַּמְתִּי
בַנֶּשֶׁף וָאֲשַׁוֵּעָה לִדְבָרְךָ יִחָלְתִּי׃ 148 קִדְּמוּ עֵינַי
אַשְׁמֻרוֹת לָשִׂיחַ בְּאִמְרָתֶךָ׃ 149 קוֹלִי שִׁמְעָה כְחַסְדֶּךָ
יְהוָה כְּמִשְׁפָּטֶךָ חַיֵּנִי׃ 150 קָרְבוּ רֹדְפֵי זִמָּה
מִתּוֹרָתְךָ רָחָקוּ׃ 151 קָרוֹב אַתָּה יְהוָה וְכָל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ
אֱמֶת׃ 152 קֶדֶם יָדַעְתִּי מֵעֵדֹתֶיךָ כִּי לְעוֹלָם יְסַדְתָּם׃

verses) is used in the original meaning from the Latin "prevenire," to come before. In that sense it exactly conveys the meaning of the Hebrew word in the text, קָדַם, to anticipate. Note on ק

Ps. CXIX.

ר

RESH.

(1) 153 Consider mine affliction, and deliver me: for
(2) I do not forget Thy law. 154 Plead my cause, and
deliver me: quicken me according to Thy word.
(3) 155 Salvation is far from the wicked: for they
(4) seek not Thy statutes. 156 Great are Thy tender
mercies, O LORD: quicken me according to Thy
(5) judgments. 157 Many are my persecutors and
mine enemies; yet do I not decline from Thy testi-
(6) monies. 158 I beheld the transgressors, and was
(7) grieved; because they kept not Thy word. 159
Consider how I love Thy precepts: quicken me, O
(8) LORD, according to Thy lovingkindness. 160 Thy
word is true from the beginning: and every one of
Thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.

ר

Note on ר The keynote of CANTO Resh is a prayer (conveyed in the expression, "quicken me,") for that

ש

SCHIEN.

(1) 161 Princes have persecuted me without a cause:
(2) but my heart standeth in awe of Thy word. 162 I
rejoice at Thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.
(3) 163 I hate and abhor lying: but Thy law do I love.
(4) 164 Seven times a day do I praise Thee because of
(5) Thy righteous judgments. 165 Great peace have

ר

153 רְאֵה־עָנְיִי וְחַלְּצֵנִי כִּי־תוֹרָתְךָ לֹא שָׁכָחְתִּי׃ Ps. CXIX.
154 רִיבָה רִיבִי וּגְאָלֵנִי לְאִמְרָתְךָ חַיֵּנִי׃ 155 רָחוֹק
מֵרְשָׁעִים יְשׁוּעָה כִּי־חֻקֶּיךָ לֹא־דָרָשׁוּ׃ 156 רַחֲמֶיךָ
רַבִּים | יְהוָה כְּמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ חַיֵּנִי׃ 157 רַבִּים רֹדְפַי
וְצָרָי מֵעֵדוֹתֶיךָ לֹא נָטִיתִי׃ 158 רָאִיתִי בֹגְדִים
וָאֶתְקוֹטָטָה אֲשֶׁר אִמְרָתְךָ לֹא שָׁמָרוּ׃ 159 רְאֵה
כִּי־פִקּוּדֶיךָ אָהָבְתִּי יְהוָה כְּחַסְדְּךָ חַיֵּנִי׃ 160 רֹאשׁ־
דְּבָרְךָ אֱמֶת וּלְעוֹלָם כָּל־מִשְׁפַּט צִדְקֶךָ׃

Note on ר

spiritual life, which is the consciousness of God in the human soul, and which gives us the highest and purest form of courage.

ש

161 שָׂרִים רְדָפוּנִי חִנָּם וּמִדְּבָרְךָ פָּחַד לִבִּי׃
162 שָׂשׂ אָנֹכִי עַל־אִמְרָתֶךָ כְּמוֹצֵא שָׁלָל רָב׃
163 שֶׁקֶר שָׂנֵאתִי וָאֲתַעֵבָה תּוֹרָתְךָ אָהָבְתִּי׃ 164 שֶׁבַע
בַּיּוֹם הִלַּלְתִּיךָ עַל מִשְׁפְּטֵי צִדְקֶךָ׃ 165 שָׁלוֹם רָב

Ps. CXIX. they which love Thy law: and nothing shall be a
(6) stumbling block to them. 166 LORD, I have hoped
for Thy salvation, and done Thy commandments.
(7) 167 My soul hath kept Thy testimonies; and I love
(8) them exceedingly. 168 I have kept Thy precepts
and Thy testimonies: for all my ways are before
Thee.

ש

Note on ש CANTO Schien expresses the calm and steadfast faith of the Psalmist. "Great peace have they that

ת

TAU.

(1) 169 Let my cry come near before Thee, O LORD:
give me understanding according to Thy word.
(2) 170 Let my supplication come before Thee: deliver
(3) me according to Thy word. 171 My lips shall utter
praise, when thou hast taught me Thy statutes.
(4) 172 My tongue shall speak of Thy word: for all
(5) Thy commandments are righteousness. 173 Let
Thine hand help me; for I have chosen Thy
(6) precepts. 174 I have longed for Thy salvation, O
(7) LORD; and Thy law is my delight. 175 Let my
soul live, and it shall praise Thee; and let Thy
(8) judgments help me. 176 I have gone astray like a
lost sheep; seek Thy servant; for I do not forget
Thy commandments.

Ps. CXIX.

לְאֹהֲבֵי תוֹרָתֶךָ וְאֵין לָמוֹ מִכְשׁוֹל׃ 166 שִׂבַּרְתִּי
לִישׁוּעָתְךָ יְהוָה וּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ עָשִׂיתִי׃ 167 שָׁמְרָה נַפְשִׁי
עֵדֹתֶיךָ וָאֹהֲבֵם מְאֹד׃ 168 שָׁמַרְתִּי פִקּוּדֶיךָ וְעֵדֹתֶיךָ
כִּי כָל־דְּרָכַי נֶגְדֶּךָ׃

love Thy law: and nothing shall be a stumbling block to them."

Note on ש

ת

169 תִּקְרַב רִנָּתִי לְפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה כִּדְבָרְךָ הֲבִינֵנִי׃
170 תָּבוֹא תְחִנָּתִי לְפָנֶיךָ כְּאִמְרָתְךָ הַצִּילֵנִי׃ 171 תַּבַּעְנָה
שְׂפָתַי תְּהִלָּה כִּי תְלַמְּדֵנִי חֻקֶּיךָ׃ 172 תַּעַן לְשׁוֹנִי
אִמְרָתֶךָ כִּי כָל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ צֶדֶק׃ 173 תְּהִי־יָדְךָ לְעָזְרֵנִי
כִּי פִקּוּדֶיךָ בָחָרְתִּי׃ 174 תָּאַבְתִּי לִישׁוּעָתְךָ יְהוָה
וְתוֹרָתְךָ שַׁעֲשֻׁעָי׃ 175 תִּחְיֶ־נַפְשִׁי וּתְהַלְלֶךָּ וּמִשְׁפָּטֶךָ
יַעְזְרֵנִי׃ 176 תָּעִיתִי כְשֶׂה אֹבֵד בַּקֵּשׁ עַבְדֶּךָ כִּי
מִצְוֹתֶיךָ לֹא שָׁכָחְתִּי׃

ת

Note on ת In CANTO Tau the "servant" of God, prays for the Divine acceptance of his prayer poem, and for Divine Mercy towards himself—and he humbly asks that if he be tempted to do wrong, God will mercifully lead him back to righteousness—as a shepherd leads a strayed sheep back to the fold.

"For," he says, "I do not *forget* Thy commandments."

When we know we have done wrong, we are sometimes apt to try *not* to hear the voice within us that reproaches us for our wrong-doing. Then we

PSALM CXX.

A Song of Degrees.

IN my distress I cried unto the LORD, and He heard me. 2 Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, and from a false tongue. 3 What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue? 4 Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of genista.* 5 Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!† 6 My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace. 7 I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war.

* A pink broom, which grows abundantly in the desert. It is exceedingly bitter. The roots, when burned, make fine charcoal, a precious thing in a country where there is no coal. "Sharp arrows of the mighty with coals of genista" is a description in imagery of the poet's hatred of all manner of untruth; he would punish, with sharpest weapon and hottest fire, the "false tongue."

† Mesech and Kedar were tribes of barbarians.

are trying to forget the commandments of God. But if—like the Psalmist—we try to remember the laws of God and are truly sorry whenever we have disobeyed them, and try hard to resist doing so again—then God will mercifully pardon our wrong-doing. The Psalmist's prayer recalls the comforting words of the prophet Isaiah: "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy on him, and unto our God and He will abundantly pardon."

Note on ת

CXX. קכ

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת

אֶל־יְהוָה בַּצָּרָתָה לִי קָרָאתִי וַיַּעֲנֵנִי׃ 2 יְהוָה הַצִּילָה
נַפְשִׁי מִשְׂפַת־שֶׁקֶר מִלָּשׁוֹן רְמִיָּה׃ 3 מַה־יִּתֶּן לָךְ
וּמַה־יֹּסִיף לָךְ לָשׁוֹן רְמִיָּה׃ 4 חִצֵּי גִבּוֹר שְׁנוּנִים עִם
גַּחֲלֵי רְתָמִים׃ 5 אוֹיָה־לִּי כִּי־גַרְתִּי מֶשֶׁךְ שָׁכַנְתִּי
עִם־אָהֳלֵי קֵדָר׃ 6 רַבַּת שָׁכְנָה־לָּהּ נַפְשִׁי עִם שׂוֹנֵא
שָׁלוֹם׃ 7 אֲנִי־שָׁלוֹם וְכִי אֲדַבֵּר הֵמָּה לַמִּלְחָמָה׃

Note on Ps. CXX.

This is the first of a series of fifteen Psalms, all with the title "A Song of Degrees," which means a song of steps, a marching song.

Old Hebrew traditions say that these Songs were sung by the Priests in procession on the steps of the Temple at Jerusalem. Some of them may be older still, and may have been sung by the Israelites, (to whom they were probably as familiar as "God Save the King" is to us), to beguile the way on the pilgrimages to Jerusalem to celebrate the three great yearly festivals of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles.*

When the Israelites were carried away as captives to Babylon, one the Psalms tells us how they silently cherished their national hymns:

"By the rivers of Babylon, there sat we down and "wept when we remembered Zion. Upon the "willows in the midst thereof we hanged our harps. "For there they that had led us captive required of

* "Three times a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place that He shall choose" (Deut. xvi. 15).

PSALM CXXI.

A Song of Degrees.

I WILL lift up mine eyes unto the hills. Whence cometh my help? 2 My help cometh from the LORD, Which made heaven and earth. 3 He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth thee will not slumber. 4 Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. 5 The LORD

"us songs, and they that had wasted us—mirth, "saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. Note on Ps. CXX.

"How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange "land?"

After seventy years' captivity in Babylon, the Israelites were allowed by King Cyrus of Persia, (who had conquered the King of Babylon), to go back to Jerusalem, and to rebuild the Temple.*

We can imagine the exiles setting out to return to the land of their fathers, joyfully singing the old marching hymns, and mingling with them new songs of joy and thankfulness to God as they approached Jerusalem, the beloved City that symbolized the history of their race and faith.

The "Songs of Degrees" seem to carry us through all the episodes of the return of Israel to the Father-land. The first one, Psalm cxx., rings with the sorrow of the home-sick exile among unsympathetic strangers.

* Ezra, ch. i.

CXXI. קבא

שִׁיר לַמַּעֲלוֹת

אֶשָּׂא עֵינַי אֶל־הֶהָרִים מֵאַיִן יָבֹוא עֶזְרִי׃ 2 עֶזְרִי
מֵעִם יְהוָה עֹשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ׃ 3 אַל־יִתֵּן לַמּוֹט
רַגְלֶךָ אַל־יָנוּם שֹׁמְרֶךָ׃ 4 הִנֵּה לֹא־יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן

Ps. CXXI. is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand. 6 The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. 7 The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: He shall preserve thy soul. 8 The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

Note on Ps. CXXI. Sorrow changes to hope as the great pilgrimage starts on its way. The pilgrims eagerly scan the horizon to catch sight of the mountain range which marks the last stage of their journey. But a vast plain is spread out before them; the mountains of Zion are not yet in sight. "Whence

PSALM CXXII.

A Song of Degrees of David.

I WAS glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD. 2 Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. 3 Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: 4 Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD; a testimony unto Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the LORD. 5 For there are set thrones of judgment the thrones of the house of David. 6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. 7 Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. 8 For the sake of my brethren and my companions I will now say, Peace be within thee. 9 For the sake of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good.

שׁוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל׃ 5 יְהוָה שֹׁמְרֶךָּ יְהוָה צִלְּךָ עַל־יַד Ps. CXXI.
יְמִינֶךָ׃ 6 יוֹמָם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא־יַכֶּכָּה וְיָרֵחַ בַּלָּיְלָה׃
7 יְהוָה יִשְׁמָרְךָ מִכָּל־רָע יִשְׁמֹר אֶת־נַפְשֶׁךָ׃ 8 יְהוָה
יִשְׁמָר־צֵאתְךָ וּבוֹאֶךָ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם׃

cometh my help?" cries the Psalmist, as he thinks Note on
of their many long days of wayfaring through un- Ps. CXXI.
known lands and across the great desert inhabited only by wild beasts.

The rest of the Psalm is his comforting and courage-giving answer to his own question.

CXXII. קכב

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד

שָׂמַחְתִּי בְּאֹמְרִים לִי בֵּית יְהוָה נֵלֵךְ׃ 2 עֹמְדוֹת
הָיוּ רַגְלֵינוּ בִּשְׁעָרַיִךְ יְרוּשָׁלָם׃ 3 יְרוּשָׁלַם הַבְּנוּיָה
כְּעִיר שֶׁחֻבְּרָה־לָּהּ יַחְדָּו׃ 4 שֶׁשָּׁם עָלוּ שְׁבָטִים
שִׁבְטֵי־יָהּ עֵדוּת לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְהוֹדוֹת לְשֵׁם יְהוָה׃ 5 כִּי
שָׁמָּה | יָשְׁבוּ כִסְאוֹת לְמִשְׁפָּט כִּסְאוֹת לְבֵית דָּוִד׃
6 שַׁאֲלוּ שְׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלִַם יִשְׁלָיוּ אֹהֲבָיִךְ׃ 7 יְהִי־שָׁלוֹם
בְּחֵילֵךְ שַׁלְוָה בְּאַרְמְנוֹתָיִךְ׃ 8 לְמַעַן אַחַי וְרֵעָי
אֲדַבְּרָה־נָּא שָׁלוֹם בָּךְ׃ 9 לְמַעַן בֵּית־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
אֲבַקְשָׁה טוֹב לָךְ׃

Note on Ps. CXXII. Jerusalem is the emblem of rejoicing, of Israel's consciousness of the Divine blessing. The pilgrims beguile the way by singing the glories of her history. In imagination they have already reached the

PSALM CXXIII.

A Song of Degrees.

UNTO Thee lift I up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in the heavens. 2 Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that He have mercy upon us. 3 Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt. 4 Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud.

Note on Ps. CXXIII. Many a long march had to be accomplished to cover the 600 miles that lay between Babylon and Jerusalem.

As the pilgrims trudged sturdily over the great Syrian desert, they strengthened their hearts and braced their bodies for the toilsome journey by the

PSALM CXXIV.

A Song of Degrees of David.

IF it had not been the LORD Who was on our side, now may Israel say; 2 If it had not been the LORD Who was on our side, when men rose up against us: 3 Then they had swallowed us up alive, when their

cherished home of their forefathers, and restored the great Temple that was the centre and focus of the religious life of Israel.

Note on Ps. CXXII.

CXXIII. קכג

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת

אֵלֶיךָ נָשָׂאתִי אֶת־עֵינַי הַיֹּשְׁבִי בַּשָּׁמָיִם׃ 2 הִנֵּה
כְעֵינֵי עַבָדִּים אֶל־יַד אֲדוֹנֵיהֶם כְּעֵינֵי שִׁפְחָה אֶל־
יַד גְּבִרְתָּהּ כֵּן עֵינֵינוּ אֶל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַד שֶׁיְּחָנֵּנוּ׃
3 חָנֵּנוּ יְהוָה חָנֵּנוּ כִּי־רַב שָׂבַעְנוּ בוּז׃ 4 רַבַּת
שָׂבְעָה־לָּהּ נַפְשֵׁנוּ הַלַּעַג הַשַּׁאֲנַנִּים הַבּוּז לִגְאֵיוֹנִים׃

Note on Ps. CXXIII.

thought of God as their great Master, to whom all mankind owes faithful service. They thought with contempt of those who had slothfully preferred their ease, and stayed behind, and prayed that God's mercy might be with His more zealous servants.

CXXIV. קכד

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד

לוּלֵי יְהוָה שֶׁהָיָה לָנוּ יֹאמַר־נָא יִשְׂרָאֵל׃ 2 לוּלֵי
יְהוָה שֶׁהָיָה לָנוּ בְּקוּם עָלֵינוּ אָדָם׃ 3 אֱזַי חַיִּים

Ps. CXXIV. wrath was kindled against us: 4 Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul: 5 Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.

6 Blessed be the LORD, Who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth. 7 Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped. 8 Our help is in the name of the LORD, Who made heaven and earth.

Note on Ps. CXXIV. The thought of the Divine Mercy that has released them from exile and captivity fills all their hearts with gratitude to God, and with the courage

PSALM CXXV.

A Song of Degrees.

THEY that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. 2 As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about His people from henceforth even for ever. 3 For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity. 4 Do good, O LORD, unto the good, and to the upright in heart. 5 As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the LORD shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity. Peace be upon Israel!

בְּלָעֻנוּ בַּחֲרוֹת אַפָּם בָּנוּ: 4 אֲזַי הַמַּיִם שְׁטָפּוּנוּ Ps. CXXIV.
נַחְלָה עָבַר עַל־נַפְשֵׁנוּ: 5 אֲזַי עָבַר עַל־נַפְשֵׁנוּ
הַמַּיִם הַזֵּידוֹנִים: 6 בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה שֶׁלֹּא נְתָנָנוּ טֶרֶף
לְשִׁנֵּיהֶם: 7 נַפְשֵׁנוּ כְּצִפּוֹר נִמְלְטָה מִפַּח יוֹקְשִׁים
הַפַּח נִשְׁבָּר וַאֲנַחְנוּ נִמְלָטְנוּ: 8 עֶזְרֵנוּ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה
עֹשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ:

to face whatever danger may come across their path. Note on
"Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made Ps. CXXIV.
Heaven and earth."

CXXV. קכה
שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת

הַבֹּטְחִים בַּיהוָה כְּהַר־צִיּוֹן לֹא־יִמּוֹט לְעוֹלָם יֵשֵׁב:
2 יְרוּשָׁלַם הָרִים סָבִיב לָהּ וַיהוָה סָבִיב לְעַמּוֹ
מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם: 3 כִּי לֹא יָנוּחַ שֵׁבֶט הָרֶשַׁע עַל
גּוֹרָל הַצַּדִּיקִים לְמַעַן לֹא־יִשְׁלְחוּ הַצַּדִּיקִים | בְּעַוְלָתָה
יְדֵיהֶם: 4 הֵיטִיבָה יְהוָה לַטּוֹבִים וְלִישָׁרִים בְּלִבּוֹתָם:
5 וְהַמַּטִּים עֲקַלְקַלּוֹתָם יוֹלִיכֵם יְהוָה אֶת־פֹּעֲלֵי הָאָוֶן
שָׁלוֹם־עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Note on Ps. CXXV. The first two verses describe with poetic imagery the mountains surrounding Jerusalem as an emblem of steadfast faith in the never-ceasing care of God. That same steadfast faith, which gives us courage in the darkest moments of trouble and danger, inspires the third verse. Without faith even the righteous—tempted by the expediency of the moment—would "put forth their hands to iniquity." The purer our faith, the greater our courage to hold fast to what

PSALM CXXVI.

A Song of Degrees.

WHEN the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. 2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the nations, The LORD hath done great things for them. 3 The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad. 4 Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south. 5 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. 6 He that goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

Note on Ps. CXXVI. PSALM cxxvi. is a song of joy and thankfulness to God for the restoration of freedom to Israel after the seventy years of captivity and exile. When we are in trouble and things seem going

we know is right through all trial and temptation; believing with perfect faith, in God's perfect justice and gracious mercy to us all. "For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous."

Note on Ps. CXXV.

We know not how, we know not when, salvation may come to us, and so arises our faith in life beyond the grave when we think of those whose souls have known little but adversity in this world.

CXXVI. קכו

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת

בְּשׁוּב יְהוָה אֶת־שִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן הָיִינוּ כְּחֹלְמִים׃ 2 אָז
יִמָּלֵא שְׂחוֹק פִּינוּ וּלְשׁוֹנֵנוּ רִנָּה אָז יֹאמְרוּ בַגּוֹיִם
הִגְדִּיל יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת עִם־אֵלֶּה׃ 3 הִגְדִּיל יְהוָה
לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּנוּ הָיִינוּ שְׂמֵחִים׃ 4 שׁוּבָה יְהוָה אֶת־
שְׁבוּתֵנוּ כַּאֲפִיקִים בַּנֶּגֶב׃ 5 הַזֹּרְעִים בְּדִמְעָה בְּרִנָּה
יִקְצֹרוּ׃ 6 הָלוֹךְ יֵלֵךְ | וּבָכֹה נֹשֵׂא מֶשֶׁךְ־הַזָּרַע בֹּא־
יָבֹא בְרִנָּה נֹשֵׂא אֲלֻמֹּתָיו׃

against us, it is good to think, as the Psalmist says, that they "who sow in tears shall reap in joy," if only they cherish the "precious seed," i.e. truth, honour, and trust in God.

Note on Ps. CXXVI.

PSALM CXXVII.

A Song of Degrees for Solomon.*

1 EXCEPT the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.

2 It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of toil. Even so He giveth His beloved in sleep.

3 Lo, sons are an heritage of the LORD, and children are His reward.

4 As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of youth.

5 Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed when they speak with enemies in the gate

PSALM CXXVIII.

A Song of Degrees.

1 HAPPY is every one that feareth the LORD, that walketh in His ways.

2 For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.

3 Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine, in the innermost parts of thy house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.

4 Behold, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD.

* The translation of this Psalm is that of Mr. C. G. Montefiore in the "Bible of Home Reading."

CXXVII. קכז

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לִשְׁלֹמֹה

אִם־יְהוָה | לֹא יִבְנֶה בַּיִת שָׁוְא עָמְלוּ בוֹנָיו בּוֹ
אִם־יְהוָה לֹא־יִשְׁמָר־עִיר שָׁוְא | שָׁקַד שׁוֹמֵר: 2 שָׁוְא
לָכֶם | מַשְׁכִּימֵי קוּם מְאַחֲרֵי־שֶׁבֶת אֹכְלֵי לֶחֶם הָעֲצָבִים
כֵּן יִתֵּן לִידִידוֹ שֵׁנָא: 3 הִנֵּה נַחֲלַת יְהוָה בָּנִים
שָׂכָר פְּרִי הַבָּטֶן: 4 כְּחִצִּים בְּיַד־גִּבּוֹר כֵּן בְּנֵי
הַנְּעוּרִים: 5 אַשְׁרֵי הַגֶּבֶר אֲשֶׁר מִלֵּא אֶת־אַשְׁפָּתוֹ
מֶהֶם לֹא־יֵבֹשׁוּ כִּי־יְדַבְּרוּ אֶת־אוֹיְבִים בַּשָּׁעַר:

CXXVIII. קכח

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת

אַשְׁרֵי כָּל־יְרֵא יְהוָה הַהֹלֵךְ בִּדְרָכָיו: 2 יְגִיעַ
כַּפֶּיךָ כִּי תֹאכֵל אַשְׁרֶיךָ וְטוֹב לָךְ: 3 אֶשְׁתְּךָ | כְּגֶפֶן
פֹּרִיָּה בְּיַרְכְּתֵי בֵיתֶךָ בָּנֶיךָ כִּשְׁתִלֵי זֵיתִים סָבִיב
לְשֻׁלְחָנֶךָ: 4 הִנֵּה כִי־כֵן יְבֹרַךְ גָּבֶר יְרֵא יְהוָה:

Ps. CXXVIII. 5 The LORD bless thee out *Zion*; may thou see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.

6 Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children. Peace be upon Israel!

Note on Ps. CXXVII. and CXXVIII. THESE two Psalms seem to echo the thoughts of the released exiles, as they neared Jerusalem after the seventy years captivity in Babylon.

They picture the joys of a good citizen's life, filled with honest work, and crowned with all the blessings of family love and a happy homestead in Jerusalem, the well-beloved city. Their earnest resolve to try to be worthy of the blessing of God inspires the first two verses of Ps. cxxvii. These

PSALM CXXX.

A Song of Degrees.

OUT of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O LORD. 2 LORD, hear my voice: let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. 3 If Thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O LORD, who shall stand? 4 But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared. 5 I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in His word do I hope. 6 My soul looketh for the LORD more than they that watch for the morning: yea, more than they that watch for the morning. 7 Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption. 8 And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Ps. CXXVIII.

5 יְבָרֶכְךָ יְהוָה מִצִּיּוֹן וּרְאֵה בְּטוּב יְרוּשָׁלִָם כֹּל יְמֵי
חַיֶּיךָ: 6 וּרְאֵה־בָנִים לְבָנֶיךָ שָׁלוֹם עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Note on Ps. CXXVII. and CXXVIII

verses came into my mind as I gazed amid the ruins of Rome on the triumphal arch erected by the Emperor Titus, to commemorate his conquest of the Jews and capture of Jerusalem. The empire of the conqueror has crumbled and vanished; but "Israel, the witness of God, still remains, a marvel to many, a puzzle to some, to accomplish in God's good time the work which God has given him to do."*

* "Bible for Home Reading." C. G. Montefiore.

CXXX. קל

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת

מִמַּעֲמַקִּים קְרָאתִיךָ יְהוָה: 2 אֲדֹנָי שִׁמְעָה בְקוֹלִי
תִּהְיֶינָה אָזְנֶיךָ קַשֻּׁבוֹת לְקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי: 3 אִם־עֲוֹנוֹת
תִּשְׁמָר־יָהּ אֲדֹנָי מִי יַעֲמֹד: 4 כִּי־עִמְּךָ הַסְּלִיחָה
לְמַעַן תִּוָּרֵא: 5 קִוִּיתִי יְהוָה קִוְּתָה נַפְשִׁי וְלִדְבָרוֹ
הוֹחָלְתִּי: 6 נַפְשִׁי לַאדֹנָי מִשֹּׁמְרִים לַבֹּקֶר שֹׁמְרִים
לַבֹּקֶר: 7 יַחֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יְהוָה כִּי־עִם־יְהוָה הַחֶסֶד
וְהַרְבֵּה עִמּוֹ פְּדוּת: 8 וְהוּא יִפְדֶּה אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכֹּל
עֲוֹנוֹתָיו:

Note on Ps. CXXX. Sometimes when we have done wrong, we lose our self-respect and feel discouraged, and as though we could not start the struggle again. How comforting it is then to read this Psalm! It helps us to feel that if we are truly sorry, there is always forgiveness with God, from whatever depths we cry unto Him.

It gives us courage to "hope in the Lord," and to feel that He will strengthen our hearts for the con-

PSALM CXXXIII.

A Song of Degrees of David.

BEHOLD, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! 2 It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; 3 As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

Note on Ps. CXXXIII. This Psalm is in praise of the spirit of love and kindliness that helps the peace and happiness of all the world. The word "brother" in Eastern countries has a wide meaning, and includes not only brothers in kinship, but also neighbours and fellow creatures. As the Psalmist and his brother-pilgrims come near the land of freedom, where no oppressive conquerors' rule will bind them in common cause to one another, he sings the beauty of peace and love and unity among brethren.

Like all poetry written in the East, this Psalm is

stant struggle with our own faults, and that if we only try hard enough, we can—through the mercy of God—earn His full forgiveness (plenteous redemption). "For there is forgiveness with Thee that Thou mayest be feared." That is the watchword of courage and comfort for all who have done wrong. Feel the fear of hope, but never despair; pray for the merciful forgiveness of God, and "hope in the Lord." Note on Ps. CXXX.

CXXXIII. קלג

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד

הִנֵּה מַה־טּוֹב וּמַה־נָּעִים שֶׁבֶת אַחִים גַּם־יָחַד׃
2 כַּשֶּׁמֶן הַטּוֹב | עַל־הָרֹאשׁ יֹרֵד עַל־הַזָּקָן זְקַן־אַהֲרֹן
שֶׁיֹּרֵד עַל־פִּי מִדּוֹתָיו׃ 3 כְּטַל־חֶרְמוֹן שֶׁיֹּרֵד עַל־
הָרְרֵי צִיּוֹן כִּי שָׁם | צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־הַבְּרָכָה חַיִּים
עַד־הָעוֹלָם׃

full of imagery—that is, of *description* by *comparison*. An Eastern poet brings his thoughts before us, not so much by speaking of the actual thing he is describing, as by speaking of some other thing that suggests the special idea he wishes to bring to our minds. Note on Ps. CXXXIII.

We do not use imagery, as Eastern people do, in ordinary conversation, though we use it in poetry. Shakespear, for instance, calls England "this precious stone set in the silver sea."

This Psalm is a poem full of imagery. The open-

Note on Ps. CXXXIII.

ing words recall the words of Moses:—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The Psalmist speaks of the happiness of always being good friends, and of never quarrelling. He does not *describe* love, but he *compares* it, first to a fragrant ointment softening and perfuming the hair and beard, flowing down a beard so long that like the beard of Aaron, the High Priest, it reaches to the very hem of the long robe that men wore (and still wear) in Eastern countries. So he brings before us the thought of a sweet ointment,* softening everything

* Every one in the East uses ointment, as we use soap, to cleanse and refresh themselves. The ointments used in the East have a delicious and refreshing perfume.

PSALM CXXXIV.

A Song of Degrees.

BEHOLD, bless ye the LORD, all ye servants of the LORD, which by night stand in the house of the LORD. 2 Lift up your hands in holiness, and bless the LORD.

3 The LORD that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.

Note on Ps. CXXXIV.

This evening hymn is the last of the Songs of degrees. The long march is ended, and the pilgrims pour out a song of praise and thanks as they reach the Temple. The third verse is the answering blessing spoken by the priests of the Temple.

Every one of us, however young, or however ignorant, may pour out our hearts in prayer to God. For He is the all-merciful Father and King of us all.

it touches, just as love sweetens all companionship. Note on Ps. CXXXIII.

Then the Psalmist compares love to the dew, that beneficent gift of God, showered on all nature. First to the dew of Hermon, a beautiful mountain, a landmark for miles round, in the country where our forefathers lived. And finally he compares it to the dew on the mountain of *Zion*, on which stood the Holy Temple, where the Lord commanded the blessing, "even life for evermore."

So the Psalmist ends with the thought that love, like the dew, is the gift of God, and is the everlasting mirror of His goodness in the human heart.

CXXXIV. קלד

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת

הִנֵּה | בָּרְכוּ אֶת־יְהוָה כָּל־עַבְדֵי יְהוָה הָעֹמְדִים
בְּבֵית־יְהוָה בַּלֵּילוֹת׃ 2 שְׂאוּ־יְדֵכֶם קֹדֶשׁ וּבָרְכוּ אֶת־
יְהוָה׃ 3 יְבָרֶכְךָ יְהוָה מִצִּיּוֹן עֹשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ׃

One of the great Rabbis said, "If thou canst not pray in the synagogue, pray in thy field; and if thou canst not pray there, pray in thy house; and if thou canst not pray there, pray in thy bed; and if thou canst not pray there, pray in thy heart." Note on Ps. CXXXIV.

Whenever and wherever we think of God, and pray to God, we are "standing in the house of the Lord."

PSALM CXXXV.

PRAISE ye the LORD. Praise ye the name of the Lord; 2 Praise, O ye servants of the LORD that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God, 3 Praise ye the LORD; for the LORD is good: sing praises unto His name; for it is pleasant. 4 For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto Himself, and Israel as His. 5 For I know that the LORD is great, and that our LORD is above all gods. 6 Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did He in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places. 7 He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; He maketh lightnings for the rain; He bringeth the wind out of his store-houses. 8 Who smote the first-born of Egypt, both of man and beast. 9 Who sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants. 10 Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings; 11 Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan: 12 And gave their land for an heritage, an heritage unto Israel His people. 13 Thy name, O LORD, endureth for ever; and Thy memorial, O LORD, throughout all generations. 14 For the LORD will judge His people, and He will have compassion on His servants. 15 The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. 16 They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; 17 They have ears, but they hear not;

CXXXV. קלה

הַלְלוּ־יָהּ | הַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה הַלְלוּ עַבְדֵי יְהוָה׃
2 שֶׁעֹמְדִים בְּבֵית יְהוָה בְּחַצְרוֹת בֵּית אֱלֹהֵינוּ׃
3 הַלְלוּ־יָהּ כִּי־טוֹב יְהוָה זַמְּרוּ לִשְׁמוֹ כִּי נָעִים׃
4 כִּי־יַעֲקֹב בָּחַר לוֹ יָהּ יִשְׂרָאֵל לִסְגֻלָּתוֹ׃ 5 כִּי
אֲנִי יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־גָדוֹל יְהוָה וַאֲדֹנֵינוּ מִכָּל־אֱלֹהִים׃
6 כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־חָפֵץ יְהוָה עָשָׂה בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ בַּיַּמִּים
וְכָל־תְּהֹמוֹת׃ 7 מַעֲלֶה נְשִׂאִים מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ בְּרָקִים
לַמָּטָר עָשָׂה מוֹצֵא רוּחַ מֵאוֹצְרוֹתָיו׃ 8 שֶׁהִכָּה בְכוֹרֵי
מִצְרַיִם מֵאָדָם עַד־בְּהֵמָה׃ 9 שָׁלַח | אֹתוֹת וּמוֹפְתִים
בְּתוֹכֵכִי מִצְרָיִם בְּפַרְעֹה וּבְכָל־עֲבָדָיו׃ 10 שֶׁהִכָּה גּוֹיִם
רַבִּים וְהָרַג מְלָכִים עֲצוּמִים׃ 11 לְסִיחֹן | מֶלֶךְ הָאֱמֹרִי
וּלְעוֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן וּלְכֹל מַמְלְכוֹת כְּנָעַן׃ 12 וְנָתַן
אַרְצָם נַחֲלָה נַחֲלָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל עַמּוֹ׃ 13 יְהוָה שִׁמְךָ
לְעוֹלָם יְהוָה זִכְרְךָ לְדֹר־וָדֹר׃ 14 כִּי־יָדִין יְהוָה עַמּוֹ
וְעַל־עֲבָדָיו יִתְנֶחָם׃ 15 עֲצַבֵּי הַגּוֹיִם כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב מַעֲשֵׂה
יְדֵי אָדָם׃ 16 פֶּה לָהֶם וְלֹא יְדַבֵּרוּ עֵינַיִם לָהֶם
וְלֹא יִרְאוּ׃ 17 אָזְנַיִם לָהֶם וְלֹא יַאֲזִינוּ אַף אֵין־

Ps. CXXXV. neither is there any breath in their mouths. 18 They that make them are like unto them: so is every one that trusteth in them. 19 Bless the LORD, O house of Israel: bless the LORD, O house of Aaron: 20 Bless the LORD, O house of Levi: ye that fear the LORD, bless the LORD. 21 Blessed be the LORD out of Zion, which dwelleth at Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

Note on Ps. CXXXV. The Psalmist reminds the race of Israel of their mission. "For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto Himself, and Israel as His," to be the first of all people on earth to receive the knowledge of the greatest fact in the whole world, the fact that is the beginning of all goodness and all learning and all wisdom, the Unity and Universality of God.

"For I myself know," says the Psalmist, "that God is great, and our Lord above all gods."

After picturing the power of God over all the wonders of creation, the Psalmist tells how the Messenger Race was redeemed from slavery in Egypt, and led safely to the land that was the ancient heritage of Israel.

But far greater than the heritage of the land is the heritage of the Message. "Thy name, O God, for ever, Thy remembrance unto all generations. For

PSALM CXLV.

David's Psalm of Praise.

I WILL extol Thee, my God, O king; and I will bless Thy name for ever and ever. 2 Every day will I bless Thee; and I will praise Thy name for

Ps. CXXXV.

יֶשׁ־רוּחַ בְּפִיהֶם׃ 18 כְּמוֹהֶם יִהְיוּ עֹשֵׂיהֶם כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־
בָּטַח בָּהֶם׃ 19 בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּרְכוּ אֶת־יְהוָה בֵּית
אַהֲרֹן בָּרְכוּ אֶת־יְהוָה׃ 20 בֵּית הַלֵּוִי בָּרְכוּ אֶת־יְהוָה
יִרְאֵי יְהוָה בָּרְכוּ אֶת־יְהוָה׃ 21 בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה | מִצִּיּוֹן
שֹׁכֵן יְרוּשָׁלָם הַלְלוּ־יָהּ׃

Note on Ps. CXXXV.

God will judge His people, and He will have compassion on his servants."

The Psalmist perceives that though the power and stability of the nation of Israel may not endure, the race of Israel shall yet remain and proclaim its message to all the inhabitants of the world—that the One God is the Creator of the Universe, and that all other gods are lifeless idols—the work of men's hands, the fiction of men's brains.*

* The six verses describing the senseless idols wrought by heathens, and exhorting Israel and all those who fear (i.e. revere) God to worship Him, are strikingly similar to a passage in Psalm cxv. (page 196), and also recalls Isaiah's scornful picture of the makers and worshippers of idols, one of the few satirical passages in the Bible (Isaiah xliv. 9—20). Surrounded as they were by nations who worshipped idols of wood and stone, we can easily imagine how often the leaders of Israel felt the need of reminding their people of the Great Message.

CXLV. קמה

תְּהִלָּה לְדָוִד

אֲרוֹמִמְךָ אֱלוֹהַי הַמֶּלֶךְ וַאֲבָרְכָה שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד׃
2 בְּכָל־יוֹם אֲבָרְכֶךָּ וַאֲהַלְלָה שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד׃

Ps. CXLV. ever and ever. 3 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable. 4 One generation shall praise Thy works to another, and shall declare Thy mighty acts. 5 I will speak of the glorious honour of Thy majesty, and of Thy wondrous works. 6 And men shall speak of the might of Thy terrible acts: and I will declare Thy greatness. 7 They shall abundantly utter the memory of Thy great goodness, and shall sing of Thy righteousness.

8 The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy. 9 The LORD is good to all: and His tender mercies are over all His works. 10 All Thy works shall praise Thee, O LORD; and Thy godly ones shall bless Thee. 11 They shall speak of the glory of Thy kingdom, and talk of Thy power; 12 To make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom. 13 Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.

14 The LORD upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down. 15 The eyes of all wait upon Thee; and Thou givest them their meat in due season. 16 Thou openest Thine hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing. 17 The LORD is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works. 18 The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth. 19 He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him: He also will hear their cry, and will save them.

Ps. CXLV.

3 גָּדוֹל יְהוָה וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד וְלִגְדֻלָּתוֹ אֵין חֵקֶר׃
4 דּוֹר לְדוֹר יְשַׁבַּח מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וּגְבוּרֹתֶיךָ יַגִּידוּ׃
5 הֲדַר כְּבוֹד הוֹדֶךָ וְדִבְרֵי נִפְלְאֹתֶיךָ אָשִׂיחָה׃
6 וֶעֱזוּז נוֹרְאוֹתֶיךָ יֹאמֵרוּ וּגְדֻלָּתְךָ אֲסַפְּרֶנָּה׃
7 זֵכֶר רַב־טוּבְךָ יַבִּיעוּ וְצִדְקָתְךָ יְרַנֵּנוּ׃ 8 חַנּוּן
וְרַחוּם יְהוָה אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם וּגְדָל־חָסֶד׃ 9 טוֹב־
יְהוָה לַכֹּל וְרַחֲמָיו עַל־כָּל־מַעֲשָׂיו׃ 10 יוֹדוּךָ יְהוָה
כָּל־מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וַחֲסִידֶיךָ יְבָרְכוּכָה׃ 11 כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתְךָ
יֹאמֵרוּ וּגְבוּרָתְךָ יְדַבֵּרוּ׃ 12 לְהוֹדִיעַ | לִבְנֵי הָאָדָם
גְּבוּרֹתָיו וּכְבוֹד הֲדַר מַלְכוּתוֹ׃ 13 מַלְכוּתְךָ מַלְכוּת
כָּל־עֹלָמִים וּמֶמְשַׁלְתְּךָ בְּכָל־דּוֹר וָדֹר׃ 14 סוֹמֵךְ
יְהוָה לְכָל־הַנֹּפְלִים וְזוֹקֵף לְכָל־הַכְּפוּפִים׃ 15 עֵינֵי כֹל
אֵלֶיךָ יְשַׂבֵּרוּ וְאַתָּה נוֹתֵן לָהֶם אֶת־אָכְלָם בְּעִתּוֹ׃
16 פּוֹתֵחַ אֶת־יָדֶךָ וּמַשְׂבִּיעַ לְכָל־חַי רָצוֹן׃ 17 צַדִּיק
יְהוָה בְּכָל־דְּרָכָיו וְחָסִיד בְּכָל־מַעֲשָׂיו׃ 18 קָרוֹב
יְהוָה לְכָל־קֹרְאָיו לְכֹל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאֻהוּ בֶּאֱמֶת׃
19 רְצוֹן־יְרֵאָיו יַעֲשֶׂה וְאֶת־שַׁוְעָתָם יִשְׁמַע וְיוֹשִׁיעֵם׃

Ps. CXLV. 20 The LORD preserveth all them that love Him: but all the wicked will He destroy.

21 My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD: and let all flesh bless His holy name for ever and ever.

Note on Ps. CXLV. This is another alphabetical Psalm,* but one letter (ן) is left out—so the verse following verse 13 may have been lost, perhaps before the Psalm was ever written down. It is a Psalm of praise, which brings home to our minds the beauty and harmony of the Divine ordering of things, and gives us something of the feeling that Pope expressed when he said, "Whatever is, is right." We *feel* this in our souls rather than *think* it in our minds, for to the mind of man, as the Psalmist says in verse 3, "the greatness of God is unsearchable."

The wide and comforting ideas of verses 8 and 9 lead up to two great thoughts in verse 10—that all the works of God are for ever silently praising Him "without speech, without language, is their voice heard" (as David says in another Psalm), and that all those who are "godly" perceive this and render thanks to God.

* Like Psalms xxv., xxxiv., xxxvii., cxi., cxii., and cxix.

PSALM CXLVI.

PRAISE ye the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul. 2 While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being. 3 Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. 4 His breath goeth

שׁוֹמֵר יְהוָה אֶת־כָּל־אֹהֲבָיו וְאֵת כָּל־הָרְשָׁעִים 20 Ps. CXLV.
יַשְׁמִיד׃ 21 תְּהִלַּת יְהוָה יְדַבֶּר־פִּי וִיבָרֵךְ כָּל־בָּשָׂר
שֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד׃

The completeness of Divine Mercy, Justice and Wisdom seems to enfold our minds as we read this Psalm. Note on Ps. CXLV.

There is a little touch in verses 18 and 19 of David's characteristic common sense, which always seems to fortify his trust in God. "The Lord is nigh to all them that call unto Him, to all that call unto Him in truth." Under stress of feeling or in error of judgment, we sometimes pray unwisely and fail to "call upon Him in truth" All unconsciously, perhaps, our minds are not attuned to the thought of God when we utter our prayer; and yet God's saving help will be nigh, but the aspiration of our prayer may remain unfulfilled.

The last verse seems almost prophetic; for countless generations have poured out their sorrows to God in the words of those sweet singers of old, the Hebrew Psalmists.

CXLVI. קמו

הַלְלוּ־יָהּ הַלְלִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה׃ 2 אֲהַלְלָה יְהוָה
בְּחַיָּי אֲזַמְּרָה לֵאלֹהַי בְּעוֹדִי׃ 3 אַל־תִּבְטְחוּ בִנְדִיבִים
בְּבֶן־אָדָם | שֶׁאֵין לוֹ תְּשׁוּעָה׃ 4 תֵּצֵא רוּחוֹ יָשֹׁב

Ps. CXLVI. forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

5 Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God: 6 Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: Which keepeth truth for ever: 7 Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: Which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD looseth the prisoners: 8 The LORD openeth the eyes of the blind: the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous: 9 The LORD preserveth the strangers; He relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked He turneth upside down. 10 The LORD shall reign for ever, even thy God, O *Zion*, unto all generations Praise ye the LORD.

Note on Ps. CXLVI. When we are unhappy we should turn for comfort to God, rather than to any mortal being. For He has infinite pity for us in all our trials. "For with Thee is the fountain of life, in Thy light shall we see light." *

If we are in misery, or in grief, or in danger, prayer to God, in Whose hands are life and death, brings us courage and comfort. And the comfort of prayer is ten-fold if we have the *habit* of prayer, if every day of our lives we bring before ourselves the thought of the Goodness of God. If we start our day by calling to mind that Highest ideal of goodness, all day long we are more quickly conscious when we

* Psalm xxxvi. 9.

Ps. CXLVI.

לְאַדְרָתוֹ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אָבְדוּ עֶשְׁתֹּנֹתָיו׃ 5 אַשְׁרֵי
שֶׁאֵל יַעֲקֹב בְּעֶזְרוֹ שִׂבְרוֹ עַל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו׃ 6 עֹשֶׂה |
שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ אֶת־הַיָּם וְאֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־בָּם הַשֹּׁמֵר אֱמֶת
לְעוֹלָם׃ 7 עֹשֶׂה מִשְׁפָּט | לָעֲשׁוּקִים נֹתֵן לֶחֶם לָרְאֵבִים
יְהוָה מַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים׃ 8 יְהוָה | פֹּקֵחַ עִוְרִים יְהוָה
זֹקֵף כְּפוּפִים יְהוָה אֹהֵב צַדִּיקִים׃ 9 יְהוָה | שֹׁמֵר אֶת־
גֵּרִים יָתוֹם וְאַלְמָנָה יְעוֹדֵד וְדֶרֶךְ רְשָׁעִים יְעַוֵּת׃
10 יִמְלֹךְ יְהוָה | לְעוֹלָם אֱלֹהַיִךְ צִיּוֹן לְדֹר וָדֹר
הַלְלוּיָהּ׃

Note on Ps. CXLVI.

depart from it, and let ourselves do what we know to be wrong. And so prayer both helps us to bear trouble bravely, and to strive to be good.

God's lovingkindness and wisdom are so great that we cannot really understand all about them. But, like the Psalmist in this Psalm, we can try to think of God's wonderful works, of His perfect justice, His everlasting mercy, and His infinite wisdom. And then we feel that something passes into our own soul which helps us to try to be good and brave and wise. Whenever we pray to God, we must think far more of God, and of His goodness, His strength and His wisdom, than of ourselves; and our very prayer, by bringing these thoughts into our minds, helps us to try to be good, and to do right.

PSALM CXLVII.

PRAISE ye the LORD: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely. 2 The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: He gathereth together the outcasts of Israel. 3 He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. 4 He telleth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their names. 5 Great is our LORD, and of great power: His understanding is infinite. 6 The LORD lifteth up the meek: He casteth the wicked down to the ground.

7 Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God: 8 Who covereth the heaven with clouds, Who prepareth rain for the earth, Who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains. 9 He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry. 10 He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: He taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. 11 The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy.

12 Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion. 13 For He hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; He hath blessed thy children within thee. 14 He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat. 15 He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth: His word runneth very swiftly. 16 He giveth snow like wool: He scattereth the hoar frost like ashes.

CXLVII. קמז

הַלְלוּ־יָהּ | כִּי־טוֹב זַמְּרָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ כִּי־נָעִים נָאוָה
תְהִלָּה׃ 2 בּוֹנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַם יְהוָה נִדְחֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יְכַנֵּס׃
3 הָרוֹפֵא לִשְׁבוּרֵי לֵב וּמְחַבֵּשׁ לְעַצְּבוֹתָם׃ 4 מוֹנֶה
מִסְפָּר לַכּוֹכָבִים לְכֻלָּם שֵׁמוֹת יִקְרָא׃ 5 גָּדוֹל אֲדוֹנֵינוּ
וְרַב־כֹּחַ לִתְבוּנָתוֹ אֵין מִסְפָּר׃ 6 מְעוֹדֵד עֲנָוִים יְהוָה
מַשְׁפִּיל רְשָׁעִים עֲדֵי־אָרֶץ׃ 7 עֱנוּ לַיהוָה בְּתוֹדָה
זַמְּרוּ לֵאלֹהֵינוּ בְּכִנּוֹר׃ 8 הַמְכַסֶּה שָׁמַיִם | בְּעָבִים
הַמֵּכִין לָאָרֶץ מָטָר הַמַּצְמִיחַ הָרִים חָצִיר׃ 9 נוֹתֵן
לִבְהֵמָה לַחְמָהּ לִבְנֵי עֹרֵב אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאוּ׃ 10 לֹא
בִגְבוּרַת הַסּוּס יֶחְפָּץ לֹא־בְשׁוֹקֵי הָאִישׁ יִרְצֶה׃ 11 רוֹצֶה
יְהוָה אֶת־יְרֵאָיו אֶת־הַמְיַחֲלִים לְחַסְדּוֹ׃ 12 שַׁבְּחִי
יְרוּשָׁלַם אֶת־יְהוָה הַלְלִי אֱלֹהַיִךְ צִיּוֹן׃ 13 כִּי־חִזַּק
בְּרִיחֵי שְׁעָרָיִךְ בֵּרַךְ בָּנַיִךְ בְּקִרְבֵּךְ׃ 14 הַשָּׂם־גְּבוּלֵךְ
שָׁלוֹם חֵלֶב חִטִּים יַשְׂבִּיעֵךְ׃ 15 הַשֹּׁלֵחַ מְרָתּוֹ אָרֶץ
עַד־מְהֵרָה יָרוּץ דְּבָרוֹ׃ 16 הַנֹּתֵן שֶׁלֶג כַּצָּמֶר כְּפוֹר

Ps. CXLVII. 17 He casteth forth His ice like morsels: who can stand before His cold? 18 He sendeth out His word, and melteth them: He causeth His wind to blow, and the waters flow. 19 He sheweth His word unto Jacob, His statutes and His judgments unto Israel. 20 He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for His judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the LORD.

Note on Ps. CXLVII. This Psalm calls on us all to give thanks to God for the blessings He has showered on us; and to learn by the marvels of Nature around us how great is the Divine love that orders the world, with all its wonders and its beauties.

The Psalmist reminds the Israelites that they are the Messengers of God, to tell and teach His laws to the whole world. "He sheweth his word unto Jacob, His statutes and His judgments unto Israel."

The Israelites are the Messengers, but God's Message is to every human being. It tells all man-

PSALM CXLVIII.

PRAISE ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise Him in the heights. 2 Praise ye Him, all His angels: praise ye Him, all His hosts. 3 Praise ye Him, sun and moon: praise Him, all ye stars of light. 4 Praise Him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. 5 Let them praise the name of

Ps. CXLVII.

בְּאֵפֶר יְפֻזֵּר׃ 17 מַשְׁלִיךְ קַרְחָו כְּפִתִּים לִפְנֵי קָרָתוֹ
מִי יַעֲמֹד׃ 18 יִשְׁלַח דְּבָרוֹ וַיְמִסֵּם יַשֵּׁב רוּחוֹ יִזְלוּ־
מָיִם׃ 19 מַגִּיד דְּבָרָו לְיַעֲקֹב חֻקָּיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו לְיִשְׂרָאֵל׃
20 לֹא־עָשָׂה כֵן ׀ לְכָל־גּוֹי וּמִשְׁפָּטִים בַּל־יְדָעוּם
הַלְלוּיָהּ׃

Note on Ps. CXLVII.

kind that the Lord taketh pleasure in all who try their utmost to obey His laws, and who humbly hope for His mercy. For He is infinitely merciful, and infinitely powerful. The Psalmist expresses and reiterates the thought in the series of beautiful word-pictures beginning: "The Lord doth build up Jerusalem," and continuing to the end of the 18th verse.

In joy and in sorrow whatever may happen to us, let us always turn to Him, "Who taketh pleasure in those that fear Him, in those that hope for His mercy."

CXLVIII. קמח

הַלְלוּיָהּ ׀ הַלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם הַלְלוּהוּ
בַּמְּרוֹמִים׃ 2 הַלְלוּהוּ כָּל־מַלְאָכָיו הַלְלוּהוּ כָּל־צְבָאָו׃
3 הַלְלוּהוּ שֶׁמֶשׁ וְיָרֵחַ הַלְלוּהוּ כָּל־כּוֹכְבֵי אוֹר׃
4 הַלְלוּהוּ שְׁמֵי הַשָּׁמָיִם וְהַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר ׀ מֵעַל הַשָּׁמָיִם׃
5 יְהַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי הוּא צִוָּה וְנִבְרָאוּ׃

Ps. CXLVIII. the LORD: for He commanded, and they were created. 6 He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: He hath made a decree which shall not pass. 7 Praise the LORD from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps. 8 Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling His word: 9 Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars: 10 Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl: 11 Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth: 12 Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children: 13 Let them praise the name of the LORD: for His name alone is excellent; His glory is above the earth and heaven. 14 He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all His saints; even of the children of Israel, a people near unto Him. Praise ye the LORD.

Note on Ps. CXLVIII. The 148th Psalm is a song of praise, which, like many others, has a more beautiful sound in Hebrew than even in English.

The writer (like our English poet Coleridge) feels how "Earth with her thousand voices praises God," and pours out a glowing expression of the thought, which leads him to realize the high privilege of Israel, the people to whom was given the sacred task of teaching the world through all time the great truth that God is the Almighty Creator of all.

Note for Older Children.—The vividness with which the Psalmist realized this great truth seems in itself little short of a miracle, if we consider how far ahead he was of all contemporary ideas about the origin of all the wonders of nature. The phenomena

Ps. CXLVIII.

6 וַיְעַמִּידֵם לָעַד לְעוֹלָם חָק־נָתַן וְלֹא יַעֲבוֹר׃
7 הַלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה מִן־הָאָרֶץ תַּנִּינִים וְכָל־תְּהֹמוֹת׃
8 אֵשׁ וּבָרָד שֶׁלֶג וְקִיטוֹר רוּחַ סְעָרָה עֹשָׂה דְבָרוֹ׃
9 הֶהָרִים וְכָל־גְּבָעוֹת עֵץ פְּרִי וְכָל־אֲרָזִים׃ 10 הַחַיָּה
וְכָל־בְּהֵמָה רֶמֶשׂ וְצִפּוֹר כָּנָף׃ 11 מַלְכֵי־אֶרֶץ וְכָל־
לְאֻמִּים שָׂרִים וְכָל־שֹׁפְטֵי אָרֶץ׃ 12 בַּחוּרִים וְגַם־
בְּתוּלוֹת זְקֵנִים עִם־נְעָרִים׃ 13 יְהַלְלוּ | אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה
כִּי־נִשְׂגָּב שְׁמוֹ לְבַדּוֹ הוֹדוֹ עַל־אֶרֶץ וְשָׁמָיִם׃ 14 וַיָּרֶם
קֶרֶן | לְעַמּוֹ תְּהִלָּה לְכָל־חֲסִידָיו לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַם
קְרֹבוֹ הַלְלוּ־יָהּ

Note on Ps. CXLVIII.

of the heavens had been an object of human study from the remotest ages*—for light and darkness are the primeval time-keepers, and the luminaries are, as it were, the hands of the clock of Nature. But the study of the heavens got mixed up with the occult imaginings of astrology, and was only disentangled and brought into the realms of exact science in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries†—while the scientific study of the earth's surface is a growth

* There are Chinese astronomical records which date back approximately to the time of Abraham, and the temples of Egypt give evidence of accurate astronomical observations thousands of years earlier still.

† Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, and Newton may be looked on as the fathers of the science of Astronomy. Copernicus was born in 1473, and Newton, the latest of the four, was born in 1642.

Note on Ps. CXLVIII. of the last two hundred years. When the revelations of these sciences of Nature burst on the world, men's minds were at first startled by the destruction of some time-honoured grooves of thought, but gradually these revelations led to an ever-truer and wider perception

PSALM CL.

PRAISE ye the LORD. Praise God in His sanctuary: praise Him in the firmament of His power. 2 Praise Him for His mighty acts: praise Him according to His excellent greatness. 3 Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet: praise Him with the psaltery and harp. 4 Praise Him with the timbrel and dance: praise Him with stringed instruments and organs. 5 Praise Him upon the loud cymbals: praise Him upon the high sounding cymbals. 6 Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

Note on Ps. CL. Here we are told to praise God, not only in every way, but in every place; to praise Him in the sanctuary, in the synagogue, and in the "firmament of His power," which means the whole world.

"Everything that hath breath," every living creature, *does* praise the Lord, for the perfection of the work praises the Great Worker, and Maker of all. The fast galloping horse, the strong lion, the huge elephant, the tiny mouse, the birds flying through the air, the fish living under the sea, every insect with the powers of life and movement in its wee body—God made them all.

of the vastness of the Divine wisdom manifest in Nature heralded as it was thousands of years before by the Psalmist, who *perceived* the truth by reason of his true understanding of the infinite power of God—though he could not *prove* it scientifically.

Note on Ps. CXLVIII.

CL. קנ

הַלְלוּיָהּ | הַלְלוּ אֵל בְּקָדְשׁוֹ הַלְלוּהוּ בִּרְקִיעַ עֻזּוֹ׃
2 הַלְלוּהוּ בִּגְבוּרֹתָיו הַלְלוּהוּ כְּרֹב גֻּדְלוֹ׃ 3 הַלְלוּהוּ
בְּתֵקַע שׁוֹפָר הַלְלוּהוּ בְּנֵבֶל וְכִנּוֹר 4 הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתֹף
וּמָחוֹל הַלְלוּהוּ בְּמִנִּים וְעֻגָב׃ 5 הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי-
שָׁמַע הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי תְרוּעָה׃ 6 כֹּל הַנְּשָׁמָה
תְּהַלֵּל יָהּ הַלְלוּ-יָהּ׃

חזק

When we think of this, we know the wonder of His work, and how perfect it all is.

Note on Ps. CL.

This Psalm, like many others, ends with the words, "Praise ye the Lord," הַלְלוּיָהּ (Halleluiah), reminding us that every one of us should praise our Maker, by always trying our utmost to please Him.

With the closing words of the Psalms in our minds let us ever be striving to praise (which means to do honour to) God by seeking in all our thoughts and acts to be just and kind, and to mirror in our hearts and in our lives the goodness and the loving-kindness of God.

DAILY, SABBATH, AND FESTIVAL PRAYERS FOR HOME USE

DAILY MORNING PRAYERS

ALMIGHTY GOD! we humbly thank Thee for Thy never-ceasing care of us.

We pray Thee to grant us Thy help and guidance and Thy merciful forgiveness of our sins. Strengthen us, O God! to resist bad thoughts and bad wishes, and to keep ourselves from doing what we know to be wrong. Help us, O Lord! to try always to do our duty, to be obedient to our Parents and our Teachers, and to be industrious in all our work.

Grant Thy blessings, O God! to us and to our dear Parents and Relations and Friends. Join us all together in love and kindness to each other, and teach us, O God! how to help and cheer all those who are in trouble. AMEN!

Note.—The prayer for those we love is not only for the living. We pray also for the blessing of God—Who delivers "their soul from death"—on the loved ones who are no longer with us in this life.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who removest sleep from mine eyes, and slumber from mine eyelids.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who hast given us the Law of truth, and hast planted everlasting life in our midst.

Moses commanded us the Law as an inheritance of the congregation of Jacob.

O my God, guard my tongue from evil, and my lips from speaking guile.

Open my heart to thy Law, and let my soul pursue Thy commandments.

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable before Thee, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is One.

(Blessed be His name, whose glorious kingdom is for ever and ever.)

And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might. And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children. And thou shalt speak of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hands and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes, and thou shalt write them on the doorposts of thy house and upon thy gates.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם · הַמַּעֲבִיר שֵׁנָה מֵעֵינַי וּתְנוּמָה מֵעַפְעַפָּי :

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם · אֲשֶׁר נָתַן־לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת · וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נָטַע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ :

תּוֹרָה צִוָּה־לָנוּ מֹשֶׁה מוֹרָשָׁה קְהִלַּת יַעֲקֹב :

אֱלֹהַי · נְצוֹר לְשׁוֹנִי מֵרָע וּשְׂפָתַי מִדַּבֵּר מִרְמָה :

פְּתַח לִבִּי בְּתוֹרָתֶךָ וּבְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ תִּרְדּוֹף נַפְשִׁי :

יִהְיוּ לְרָצוֹן אִמְרֵי פִי וְהֶגְיוֹן לִבִּי לְפָנֶיךָ · יְיָ צוּרִי וְגוֹאֲלִי :

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֶחָד :

(בָּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד :)

וְאָהַבְתָּ אֵת יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל־מְאֹדֶךָ

וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם עַל־לְבָבֶךָ : וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם לְבָנֶיךָ וְדִבַּרְתָּ בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתֶךָ וּבְלֶכְתְּךָ בַדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשָׁכְבְּךָ וּבְקוּמֶךָ : וּקְשַׁרְתָּם לְאוֹת עַל־יָדֶךָ וְהָיוּ לְטֹטָפֹת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ : וּכְתַבְתָּם עַל מְזוּזוֹת בֵּיתֶךָ וּבִשְׁעָרֶיךָ :

DAILY MORNING PSALMS

(It is suggested that one of these Psalms should be read daily after Morning Prayers.)

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BIRTHDAY PSALM

PSALM XC., p. 120.

PSALMS IN ILLNESS

PSALM XX., p. 16. PSALM XXXIX., p. 42.
PSALM CXIX. ע, p. 234.

DAILY MORNING PSALMS

The Infant Psalter

The twelve simplest Psalms, arranged in order of simplicity.

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NIGHT PRAYERS

HEAR, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is One. (Blessed be His name, whose glorious kingdom is for ever and ever.) And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might.*

I thank Thee, O God! for Thy merciful care of me this day, and for all the blessings I have enjoyed. I pray Thee, O God! to forgive me for all I have done wrong this day, and to help me to try more and more earnestly to do right.

Pray, God, watch over and bless me, and all those who are dear to me, this night. Amen.

"Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep."

"To Him my spirit I commend at morn and eve
with faith sincere,
"My spirit, and its mortal frame—the Lord with me
I will not fear."

"I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for Thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety."—Amen!

* Older Children, add the rest of the שמע, p. 284.

My God! the soul which Thou hast given me is pure. Thou didst create it, form it, and breathe it into me; Thou preservest it within me, and Thou wilt hereafter take it from me, to restore it unto me in futurity. As long as my soul continueth within me, I will acknowledge before Thee, O Lord my God, and the God of my fathers, that Thou art the Sovereign of all creatures and Lord of all souls. Blessed art Thou, O Lord! Who restorest the souls unto the dead.

May it be Thy will, O Lord our God and God of our fathers, to make us familiar with Thy Law and to make us cleave to Thy commandments. O lead us not into the power of sin, trangression, wrong doing, temptation or scorn: let not evil thoughts have sway over us: keep us far from bad people and bad companions: make us cleave to good thoughts and good deeds and bend our thoughts to striving to serve Thee, and grant us this day and every day, grace, favour and mercy in Thine eyes, and in the eyes of all who behold us; and bestow gracious favours upon us. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who bestowest gracious favours upon thy people Israel.

(*On Sabbaths add:*)

Our God and God of our fathers, accept our rest; sanctify us by Thy commandments, and grant our portion in Thy Law; satisfy us with Thy goodness, and gladden us with Thy salvation; purify our hearts to serve Thee in truth; and in Thy love and favour, O Lord our God, let us inherit Thy holy Sabbath; and may Israel, who hallow Thy name, rest thereon. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who hallowest the Sabbath.

אֱלֹהַי · נְשָׁמָה שֶׁנָּתַתָּ בִּי טְהוֹרָה הִיא: אַתָּה בְרָאתָהּ אַתָּה יְצַרְתָּהּ אַתָּה נְפַחְתָּהּ בִּי · וְאַתָּה מְשַׁמְּרָהּ בְּקִרְבִּי · וְאַתָּה עָתִיד לִטְּלָהּ מִמֶּנִּי וּלְהַחֲזִירָהּ בִּי לֶעָתִיד לָבֹא: כָּל־זְמַן שֶׁהַנְּשָׁמָה בְּקִרְבִּי מוֹדֶה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהַי וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתַי רִבּוֹן כָּל־הַמַּעֲשִׂים אֲדוֹן כָּל הַנְּשָׁמוֹת: בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ · הַמַּחֲזִיר נְשָׁמוֹת לְמֵתִים:

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ · שֶׁתַּרְגִּילֵנוּ בְּתוֹרָתֶךָ וְדַבְּקֵנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ · וְאַל תְּבִיאֵנוּ לֹא לִידֵי חֵטְא וְלֹא לִידֵי עֲבֵרָה וְעָוֹן וְלֹא לִידֵי נִסָּיוֹן וְלֹא לִידֵי בְזָיוֹן · וְאַל תַּשְׁלֵט־בָּנוּ יֵצֶר הָרַע · וְהַרְחִיקֵנוּ מֵאָדָם רַע וּמֵחָבֵר רַע · וְדַבְּקֵנוּ בְּיֵצֶר הַטּוֹב וּבְמַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים · וְכֹף אֶת יִצְרֵנוּ לְהִשְׁתַּעְבֵּד־לָךְ · וּתְּנֵנוּ הַיּוֹם וּבְכָל־יוֹם לְחֵן וּלְחֶסֶד וּלְרַחֲמִים בְּעֵינֶיךָ וּבְעֵינֵי כָל־רוֹאֵינוּ · וְתִגְמְלֵנוּ חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים: בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ · גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל:

(*On Sabbaths add:*)

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ · רְצֵה בִמְנוּחָתֵנוּ · קַדְּשֵׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ וְתֵן חֶלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרָתֶךָ · שַׂבְּעֵנוּ מִטּוּבֶךָ וְשַׂמְּחֵנוּ בִּישׁוּעָתֶךָ · וְטַהֵר לִבֵּנוּ לְעָבְדְּךָ בֶּאֱמֶת · וְהַנְחִילֵנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרָצוֹן שַׁבַּת קָדְשֶׁךָ · וְיָנוּחוּ בָהּ יִשְׂרָאֵל מְקַדְּשֵׁי שְׁמֶךָ · בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ · מְקַדֵּשׁ הַשַּׁבָּת:

SABBATH PSALMS.

First Week.		PAGE
PSALM	XIX.	10
„	XX.	16
„	XXXIII.	34
„	XCII.	130
„	CXLV.	264
„	CXLVI.	268

Second Week.		PAGE
PSALM	XXIX.	26
„	XXXIV.	38
„	XCIII.	134
„	CIV.	158
„	CXLV.	264
„	CXLVII.	272

Third Week.		PAGE
PSALM	XC.	120
„	CIII.	154
„	CXXVI.	252
„	CXXX.	256
„	CXLV.	264
„	CXLVIII.	274

Fourth Week.		PAGE
PSALM	LXXXIV.	110
„	XCI.	126
„	CXI.	186
„	CXII.	188
„	CXLV.	264
„	CL.	278

PSALMS FOR ALL FESTIVALS.

PSALM	CXIII.	page 192	THE HALLEL.
„	CXIV.	„ 194	
„	CXV.	„ 196	
„	CXVI.	„ 200	
„	CXVII.	„ 204	
„	CXVIII.	„ 204	
„	XXIV.	„ 20	

PSALMS FOR PASSOVER,

First Days.

PSALM CVII. . page 178 | PSALM LXVI. . page 88

Last Days.

PSALM CV. . page 164 | PSALM CVI. . page 172

PSALM FOR PENTECOST.

I.

PSALM CXIX., Cantos א to ל . . . . page 210

II.

PSALM CXIX., Canto מ to end of Psalm . . page 228

PSALMS FOR NEW YEAR.

PSALM LXXXI., page 100 | PSALM XLVII. . page 54

PSALMS FOR THE DAY OF ATONEMENT.

PSALM XXXII. .	page 28	PSALM LVII. .	page 70
„ XLIX. .	„ 56	„ LXV. .	„ 84
„ LI. .	„ 64	„ LXXVII.	„ 92
„ LVI. .	„ 68	„ CXXX. .	„ 256

PSALMS FOR TABERNACLES.

First Days.

PSALM CIII. . page 154 | PSALM CIV. . page 158

Last Days.

PSALM XLVI. page 50 | PSALM XXIII. . page 18

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

EXODUS XX. 1—17.

AND God spake all these words, saying: —

I.—I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

II.—Thou shalt have no other gods before Me. Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image; nor the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation unto them that hate Me: and showing mercy to the thousandth generation, unto them that love me and keep my commandments.

III.—Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

IV.—Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is a sabbath unto the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is therein, and rested on the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

שמות כ׳ א—י״ז

וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֵת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה לֵאמֹר׃

א אָנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים׃

ב לֹא יִהְיֶה לְךָ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים עַל פָּנָי׃ לֹא־תַעֲשֶׂה לְךָ פֶסֶל וְכָל תְּמוּנָה אֲשֶׁר בַּשָּׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל וַאֲשֶׁר בָּאָרֶץ מִתָּחַת וַאֲשֶׁר בַּמַּיִם מִתַּחַת לָאָרֶץ׃ לֹא תִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לָהֶם וְלֹא תָעָבְדֵם כִּי אָנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֵל קַנָּא פֹּקֵד עֲוֹן אָבֹת עַל־בָּנִים עַל־שִׁלֵּשִׁים וְעַל־רִבֵּעִים לְשֹׂנְאָי׃ וְעֹשֶׂה חֶסֶד לַאֲלָפִים לְאֹהֲבַי וּלְשֹׁמְרֵי מִצְוֹתָי׃

ג לֹא תִשָּׂא אֶת־שֵׁם־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לַשָּׁוְא כִּי לֹא יְנַקֶּה יְהוָה אֵת אֲשֶׁר־יִשָּׂא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ לַשָּׁוְא׃

ד זָכוֹר אֶת־יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ׃ שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲבֹד וְעָשִׂיתָ כָּל־מְלַאכְתֶּךָ׃ וְיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבָּת לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא־תַעֲשֶׂה כָל־מְלָאכָה אַתָּה | וּבִנְךָ וּבִתֶּךָ עַבְדְּךָ וַאֲמָתְךָ וּבְהֶמְתֶּךָ וְגֵרְךָ אֲשֶׁר בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ׃ כִּי שֵׁשֶׁת־יָמִים עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֶת־הַיָּם וְאֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־בָּם וַיָּנַח בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי עַל־כֵּן בֵּרַךְ יְהוָה אֶת־יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת וַיְקַדְּשֵׁהוּ׃

V.—Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI.—Thou shalt not murder.

VII.—Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII.—Thou shalt not steal.

IX.—Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

X.—Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's.

ה כַּבֵּד אֶת־אָבִיךָ וְאֶת־אִמֶּךָ לְמַעַן יַאֲרִכוּן יָמֶיךָ עַל
הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ׃

ו לֹא תִרְצָח׃

ז לֹא תִנְאָף׃

ח לֹא תִגְנֹב׃

ט לֹא תַעֲנֶה בְרֵעֲךָ עֵד שָׁקֶר׃

י לֹא תַחְמֹד בֵּית רֵעֶךָ לֹא תַחְמֹד אֵשֶׁת רֵעֶךָ
וְעַבְדּוֹ וַאֲמָתוֹ וְשׁוֹרוֹ וַחֲמֹרוֹ וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר לְרֵעֶךָ׃

It is our duty to praise the Lord of all things, to ascribe greatness to Him Who formed the world in the beginning, since He hath not made us like the nations of other lands, and hath not placed us like other families of the earth, since He hath not assigned unto us a portion as unto them, nor a lot as unto all their multitude. For we bend the knee and offer worship and thanks before the supreme King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, Who stretched forth the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth, the seat of Whose glory is in the heavens above, and the abode of Whose might is in the loftiest heights. He is our God; there is none else: in truth He is our King; there is none besides Him; as it is written in His Law, And thou shalt know this day, and lay it to thine heart, that the Lord He is God in heaven above and upon the earth beneath: there is none else.

(*Recite the* שְׁמַע, *page* 285.)

עָלֵינוּ לְשַׁבֵּחַ לַאֲדוֹן הַכֹּל לָתֵת גְּדֻלָּה לְיוֹצֵר
בְּרֵאשִׁית׃ שֶׁלֹּא עָשָׂנוּ כְּגוֹיֵי הָאֲרָצוֹת וְלֹא שָׂמָנוּ
כְּמִשְׁפְּחוֹת הָאֲדָמָה׃ שֶׁלֹּא שָׂם חֶלְקֵנוּ כָּהֶם וְגוֹרָלֵנוּ כְּכָל
הֲמוֹנָם׃ וַאֲנַחְנוּ כּוֹרְעִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים לִפְנֵי
מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמְּלָכִים הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא׃ שֶׁהוּא
נוֹטֶה שָׁמַיִם וְיוֹסֵד אָרֶץ׃ וּמוֹשַׁב יְקָרוֹ בַּשָּׁמַיִם
מִמַּעַל וּשְׁכִינַת עֻזּוֹ בְּגָבְהֵי מְרוֹמִים׃ הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ
אֵין עוֹד׃ אֱמֶת מַלְכֵּנוּ׃ אֶפֶס זוּלָתוֹ׃ כַּכָּתוּב
בְּתוֹרָתוֹ׃ וְיָדַעְתָּ הַיּוֹם וַהֲשֵׁבֹתָ אֶל־לְבָבֶךָ כִּי יְיָ
הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים בַּשָּׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל וְעַל־הָאָרֶץ מִתָּחַת
אֵין עוֹד׃

אדון עולם

*Lord of the Universe! who reigned ere yet was formed created thing,
When all was by Thy bidding made, then was Thy Name proclaimèd King.

And after all shall pass away, He shall alone tremendous reign.
He was, He is, and He will be, to Him doth glory appertain.

The Lord is one and there is none with Him to liken or compare,
Without beginning, without end, all things His majesty declare.

†Without a measure or a form, beyond the reach of mind and sense,
And matter's laws of change and cause, sublime in pow'r and excellence—

My God and my Redeemer lives, Rock of my trust when griefs befal,
My Banner and my Tower of strength, and my cup's portion when I call.

To Him my spirit I commend at morn and eve with faith sincere,
My spirit and its mortal frame—The Lord with me I will not fear.

* English version by Jacob Waley.
† This verse is only included in the version of this ancient morning Hymn used by the Spanish and Portuguese congregations.

אדון עולם

אֲדוֹן עוֹלָם · אֲשֶׁר מָלַךְ בְּטֶרֶם כָּל־יְצִיר נִבְרָא:
לְעֵת נַעֲשָׂה בְחֶפְצוֹ־כֹל · אֲזַי מֶלֶךְ שְׁמוֹ נִקְרָא:

וְאַחֲרֵי כִּכְלוֹת הַכֹּל · לְבַדּוֹ יִמְלוֹךְ נוֹרָא:
וְהוּא הָיָה · וְהוּא הֹוֶה · וְהוּא יִהְיֶה בְּתִפְאָרָה:

וְהוּא אֶחָד · וְאֵין שֵׁנִי לְהַמְשִׁיל לוֹ לְהַחְבִּירָה:
בְּלִי רֵאשִׁית בְּלִי תַכְלִית · וְלוֹ הָעֹז וְהַמִּשְׂרָה:

בְּלִי עֵרֶךְ בְּלִי דִמְיוֹן · בְּלִי שִׁנּוּי וְהַתְמוּרָה:
בְּלִי חִבּוּר בְּלִי פְרוּד · גְּדוֹל כֹּחַ וְהַגְּבוּרָה:

וְהוּא אֵלִי · וְחַי גּוֹאֲלִי · וְצוּר חֶבְלִי בְּעֵת צָרָה:
וְהוּא נִסִּי וּמָנוֹס לִי · מְנָת כּוֹסִי בְּיוֹם אֶקְרָא:

בְּיָדוֹ אַפְקִיד רוּחִי · בְּעֵת אִישַׁן וְאָעִירָה:
וְעִם־רוּחִי גְּוִיָּתִי · יְיָ לִי וְלֹא אִירָא:

יִגְדַּל׃

*Praised be the living God and glorified, Whose being hath no origin or date.

One and alone in Unity is He; in Majesty unseen, eternal state.

He hath no corp'real frame, no outward form, a Spirit, in His holiness sublime.

Prior was He to all created things, the First without beginning and beyond all time.

Behold He is the Lord of all the world; His greatness and His sway all things proclaim.

The spirit of his prophesy He gave unto His servants chos'n to exalt His name.

In Israel ne'er hath ris'n like Moses yet, a Prophet who beheld Him face to face.

God to His people gave the law of truth, through the great Prophet, faithful of his race.

His Law God ne'er will change, nor substitute another in its place while Time shall last.

He seeth and knoweth all our secret thoughts. To Him is clear the future as the past.

* English version by Jacob Waley.

יִגְדַּל׃

יִגְדַּל אֱלֹהִים חַי וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח׃ נִמְצָא וְאֵין עֵת
אֶל־מְצִיאוּתוֹ׃
אֶחָד וְאֵין יָחִיד כְּיִחוּדוֹ׃ נֶעְלָם וְגַם אֵין סוֹף
לְאַחְדוּתוֹ׃
אֵין לוֹ דְּמוּת הַגּוּף וְאֵינוֹ גּוּף׃ לֹא נַעֲרוֹךְ
אֵלָיו קְדֻשָּׁתוֹ׃
קַדְמוֹן לְכָל־דָּבָר אֲשֶׁר נִבְרָא׃ רִאשׁוֹן וְאֵין
רֵאשִׁית לְרֵאשִׁיתוֹ׃
הִנּוֹ אֲדוֹן עוֹלָם׃ לְכָל נוֹצָר יוֹרֶה גְּדֻלָּתוֹ
וּמַלְכוּתוֹ׃
שֶׁפַע נְבוּאָתוֹ נָתַנּוֹ אֶל־אַנְשֵׁי סְגֻלָּתוֹ וְתִפְאָרְתּוֹ׃
לֹא קָם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל כְּמֹשֶׁה עוֹד נָבִיא׃ וּמַבִּיט
אֶת־תְּמוּנָתוֹ׃
תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת נָתַן לְעַמּוֹ אֵל׃ עַל יַד נְבִיאוֹ
נֶאֱמַן בֵּיתוֹ׃
לֹא יַחֲלִיף הָאֵל וְלֹא יָמִיר דָּתוֹ לְעוֹלָמִים
לְזוּלָתוֹ׃

The good for his good works will He requite, the wicked punish for his evil ways—
And unto those who His salvation seek, will send Messiah at the end of days.
Yea, in His mercy, He the dead will raise; blest be His Name with everlasting praise!

GRACE AFTER MEALS

BLESSED is He, and blessed is His Name.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who feedest the whole world with Thy goodness, with grace, with lovingkindness and tender mercy; Thou givest food to all flesh, for Thy lovingkindness endureth for ever, and through Thy great goodness food hath never failed us: O may it not fail us for ever and ever for Thy great name's sake, since Thou nourishest and sustainest all beings, and doest good unto all, and providest food for all Thy creatures whom Thou hast created. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Who givest food unto all.

צוֹפֶה וְיוֹדֵעַ סְתָרֵינוּ · מַבִּיט לְסוֹף דָּבָר בְּקַדְמָתוֹ :
גּוֹמֵל לְאִישׁ חֶסֶד כְּמִפְעָלוֹ · נוֹתֵן לָרָשָׁע רַע כְּרִשְׁעָתוֹ :
יִשְׁלַח לְקֵץ יָמִין מְשִׁיחֵנוּ · לִפְדוֹת מְחַכֵּי קֵץ יְשׁוּעָתוֹ :
מֵתִים יְחַיֶּה אֵל בְּרֹב חַסְדּוֹ · בָּרוּךְ עֲדֵי עַד שֵׁם תְּהִלָּתוֹ :

GRACE AFTER MEALS

בָּרוּךְ הוּא וּבָרוּךְ שְׁמוֹ : בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם · הַזָּן אֶת־הָעוֹלָם כְּלּוֹ · בְּטוּבוֹ בְּחֵן בְּחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים · הוּא נוֹתֵן לֶחֶם לְכָל־בָּשָׂר · כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ : וּבְטוּבוֹ הַגָּדוֹל תָּמִיד לֹא־חָסַר לָנוּ וְאַל־יֶחְסַר לָנוּ מָזוֹן לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד בַּעֲבוּר שְׁמוֹ הַגָּדוֹל : כִּי הוּא זָן וּמְפַרְנֵס לַכֹּל וּמֵטִיב לַכֹּל וּמֵכִין מָזוֹן לְכָל־בְּרִיּוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא · בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ · הַזָּן אֶת־הַכֹּל :

BIRTHDAY PRAYER

ALMIGHTY GOD! Who art the author of my being, I humbly thank Thee for having guarded me and taken care of me in all my past life, and preserved me in health and happiness during this past year of my life.

O merciful God! forgive, I pray Thee, all I have done wrong in this year and in all my past life. "For there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared."

Strengthen me, O God! to try more and more earnestly in this coming year to do what I know to be right, and ever to resist doing what I know to be wrong; so that I may firmly prevent myself from being tempted, either by my own wicked desires or by the evil desires of others, to do what I know to be wrong. Put a new heart within me, O God! that I may be ever striving to grow better and more worthy of all the blessings Thou hast bestowed on me, O God!

"Teach me to number my days that I may apply my heart unto wisdom."

This day I have completed another year of my life, I have one less year to live. Help me, O Lord! to recollect how short my life may be, to think of the

value of time, and never to waste my time in idleness; but ever to work to become wiser and to try to be useful to my fellow-creatures, and may it please Thee, O God! to endue me with wisdom and understanding.

In Thy infinite mercy, O Lord! continue to grant me life, health, and happiness during the coming year.

Bless also, O God! my dear Parents, Brothers, and Sisters, and all who are dear to me, and may Thy Divine care preserve them in health, strength, and happiness.

"May Thy mercy, O Lord! be upon us, according as we hope in Thee." Amen.

PSALM XC., p. 120.

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